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Youth Programs for Special Occasions

By
RUTH SCHROEDER



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YOUTH PROGRAMS FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS

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I

The Land of Beginning Again

(*New Year*)

INSTRUMENTAL PRELUDE: "Lead, Kindly Light."

CALL TO WORSHIP:

And I said to the man who stood at
the gate of the year: "Give me a light
that I may tread safely into the unknown."

And he replied:

"Go out into the darkness and put your hands
into the Hand of God. That shall be to you
better than light and safer than a known way." ¹

—MINNIE L. HASKINS

INVOCATION:

O God, help us to enter this new year with a more perfect faith in thee. May we walk through all the days of the new year with our hand in thine. AMEN.

HYMN: "He Leadeth Me," or "Saviour, Like a Shepherd Lead Us."

SCRIPTURE VERSES FOR THE NEW YEAR:

Leader: Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect;

Group: But I press on, if so be that I may lay hold on that for which also I was laid hold on by Christ Jesus.

Leader: I count not myself yet to have laid hold; but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before,

Group: I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Leader: Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new.

Group: I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me.²

POEM (by leader):

I wish that there were some wonderful place
 Called the Land of Beginning Again,
 Where all our mistakes and all our heartaches
 And all of our poor selfish grief
 Could be dropped like a shabby old coat at the door,
 And never be put on again.³

—LOUISA F. TARKINGTON

LEADER:

Have you ever wished that you could start all over again—that you could have another try at life? A poet once had this thought and wished for a Land of Beginning Again. The Christian message offers each one of us a Land of Beginning Again. The gospel of Christ is the gospel of the second chance. It enables us to begin life anew under the leadership of Jesus Christ. Each new year is also an opportunity of entering the Land of Beginning Again. With Christ's help we are given a new chance at life each year.

READER:

I am the New Year.
 I am an unspoiled page in your book of time.
 I am your next chance at the art of living.
 I am your opportunity to practice what you have learned during another twelve months about life.
 All that you sought and found not is hidden in me, waiting for you to search it out with a more single purpose.
 All the good that you tried for and achieved not is mine to grant when your effort be less hindered by conflicting desire.
 That which you dreamed but dared not, all that you hoped but willed not, the faith that you claimed but had not—these slumber lightly, waiting to be awakened at the touch of a strong purpose.
 I am your opportunity to give yourself in a new allegiance and understanding to him who said, "Behold, I make all things new."
 I am the New Year.⁴

TALK I:

A LAND OF FORGIVENESS

THE Land of Beginning Again, which this new year offers to us, is a land of forgiveness. Jesus invites young people to come to him with their problems and perplexities, their discouragements and disillusionments, their selfishness and sin.

Every young person has problems which seem very difficult to solve. Some young people are self-conscious and shy, feel inferior and inadequate, and find it difficult to make friends. Others have problems in connection with home relationships and with school and social activities. Still others have questions regarding their religious beliefs, the choice of a lifework and of a life companion. Christ wants to share all of these perplexities with us and to give us help in finding a solution to them.

The greatest problem of all is the problem of sin. Perhaps many of us do not realize this and have not faced squarely the seriousness of sin. Sin has made our lives self-centered, shallow, and ordinary in the year that is ending. In the new year just before us we may enter a wonderful Land of Beginning Again. We may confess our cheap and second-rate thoughts and actions to Christ, seek his forgiveness, and with his help enter a new year of abundant, victorious living.

REFRAIN (sung softly as solo or duet): First stanza of "Dear Lord and Father of Mankind."

READER:

I am the New Year.

I am an unspoiled page in your book of time.

I am your next chance at the art of living.

TALK II:

A LAND OF RENEWED FRIENDSHIP

THE new year offers a Land of Beginning Again in the realm of friendship. Have we ever realized how much our friends mean to us, how utterly impoverished our lives would be if every friend were suddenly cut off from us and we went through the motions of living completely alone?

The new year gives us an opportunity to renew friendships that have been broken. Are we big enough to say to a friend, "I am sorry for the unkind word which I have spoken"? We should renew friendships which have lapsed because we were too thoughtless to answer a letter or to help a friend in need or to understand a person better.

The new year of beginning again also provides an unlimited opportunity for making new friends. That boy who seems so quiet and uninteresting—if we went out of our way to befriend him, he would doubtless make a splendid contribution to our lives. That girl who is shy and lonely—if we went out of our way to be a friend to her, we could no doubt help her become radiant and full of joy.

The Land of Beginning Again likewise calls us to a new and satisfying friendship with Jesus Christ. The new year challenges us to make prayer a vital part of our lives. Communication is necessary to friendship. Prayer is our communication with God. It is a two-way proposition. We speak to God, and we listen in quiet meditation as he speaks to us. The new year just before us may be a joyous adventure of renewed friendship with God and with our fellow men.

REFRAIN (sung softly by entire group): First stanza of "What a Friend We Have in Jesus."

READER:

I am the New Year.

I am an unspoiled page in your book of time.

I am your next chance at the art of living.

TALK III:

A LAND OF RENEWED COURAGE

THE Land of Beginning Again, which this new year provides for us, is a land of renewed courage. All of us need to have our courage revived at times. There are many disappointments and discouragements which "get us down" and cause us to feel that we are not adequate for the tasks before us. Too often we have the "grasshopper psychology" which troubled eight of the scouts who were sent by Moses to spy out the land of Canaan. They reported to Moses, "All the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. . . . And we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight." They were lacking in courage and faith, and felt unequal to the task God had assigned to them.

We are reminded in God's Word that "they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." What better time to do this than at the threshold of a Land of Beginning Again! Let us enter the new year with a new faith in Christ. Let us turn our lives over to him and ask him daily to lead and guide us in all tasks and decisions. Then we shall indeed receive a new lease on life. We shall discover new energy and enthusiasm, new courage and confidence for daily living.

REFRAIN (sung softly as solo or duet): First stanza of "O Jesus, I Have Promised."

READER:

I am the New Year.

I am an unspoiled page in your book of time.

I am your next chance at the art of living.

TALK IV:

A LAND OF RENEWED SERVICE

IF THE Land of Beginning Again is for us a land of renewed strength and courage, then it should also be a land of renewed service. We receive help and strength from Christ in order that we may give of ourselves in greater service and helpfulness to others.

Jesus said, "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall find it." Again he said, "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant." The law of life is that true happiness and real purpose for living come from a complete giving of self in service to God and man.

Someone has well said that service is the rent we pay for the space we occupy on the earth. Dr. Adler, the famous psychiatrist, once declared that the cause of most mental ills is the failure to understand the meaning of the words "It is more blessed to give than to receive." This new year will truly be for us a Land of Beginning Again if we make it a year of renewed service for God and others.

REFRAIN (sung softly as solo or duet): First stanza of "O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee."

READER:

I am the New Year.

I am an unspoiled page in your book of time.

I am your next chance at the art of living.

LEADER (If the closing period of meditation is used as suggested, a sheet of paper and an envelope should be distributed to each person present.):

Each one of us has been reminded of ways in which he can make this new year a greater year of Christian growth and service. During these closing moments of meditation let each one of us list the specific ways in which he desires to go forward in Christian living during the new year. (Pianist may play softly "Living for Jesus.")

1. We may discover the forgiveness of Christ during the new year. We may seek the guidance and help of Christ each day of the new year.

2. The new year may be a year of renewed friendship: the renewal of broken friendships, the making of new friends, the developing of a more vital friendship with Jesus Christ. List specific hopes and aspirations which are yours for the new year. (Give time for meditation and the writing of goals for the new year. The leader may fill out his own paper at this time.)

3. The new year may be a year of renewed courage. Daily prayer and meditation will give us a new lease on life.

4. The new year may also be a year of renewed service. Each of us should decide upon at least one specific new service that he will render for Christ and for his fellow men during this new year. (Give time for completing of lists.)

You may seal your list in the envelope which has been handed to you and write your name and address on the outside of the envelope. These new year goals will be kept unopened by our sponsor and mailed to us the week preceding Easter. They will be reminders to us to check up on ourselves and see whether or not we are, with the help of Jesus Christ, making the new year a Land of Beginning Again.

CLOSING PRAYER:

O Christ, who canst make all things new, may this be a moment of high resolve for each one of us. We need thy help in order to carry out the noble purposes which we have envisioned. May this new year be different from all the years that have gone before, because we have experienced a more vital faith in thee. In thy name we pray. **AMEN.**

2

The Vision Glorious

(Race Relations Sunday)

PRELUDE: "Dear Lord and Father of Mankind."

CALL TO WORSHIP:

A noble life, a simple faith,
An open heart and hand—
These are the lovely litanies
Which all men understand.

These are the firmknit bonds of grace,
Though hidden to the view,
Which bind in sacred brotherhood
All men the whole world through.

—A. S. ISAACS

HYMN: "Jesus Shall Reign, Where'er the Sun."

SCRIPTURE:

But now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us. . . . Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; . . . and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth. . . . There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.¹

PRAYER:

Our Father who art in heaven, we thank thee for Christ, who came to break down the barriers that separate men and nations. We thank thee for the fellowship in Christ that unites men, women, and young people of all lands and nationalities. Forgive us for not manifesting more fully the unity and oneness that are possible among those of all races who follow Christ as Saviour and Lord. In his name we pray. AMEN.

RESPONSE (by entire group): First stanza of "Dear Lord and Father of Mankind."

LEADER:

A dramatic presentation entitled *The Vision Glorious* will be given by several young people. Our prayer should be that as this drama is presented each one of us may catch a glimpse of the "vision glorious"—that vision of the value of every human soul, regardless of color, race, or nationality.

DRAMATIC PRESENTATION:

THE VISION GLORIOUS

SCENE I:

DICK (*Puts aside the book he is reading and rises as JANE and BOB enter*): Hello, Jane and Bob. Come in and make yourselves comfortable.

JANE: Hello, Dick, and thanks for inviting us in.

BOB: It's a swell day. We've hiked for about three miles, I guess.

DICK: Then you must feel in need of the pause that refreshes!

JANE: I'll admit that's one reason we stopped. Not the only reason, of course! (*They seat themselves informally.*)

BOB: What were you reading, Dick, when we so rudely interrupted?

DICK: *Lost Boundaries* by W. L. White. I must confess that I can't get as interested in people of other races as Mr. White does. In fact, I find it difficult to be at all sympathetic toward other races.

JANE: I used to feel that way, Dick, but the more I thought about it the more unreasonable it seemed to hold it against a person because his skin was a different color.

DICK: I suppose it is unreasonable, but that fact doesn't alter my feelings.

BOB: One thing that has helped me appreciate other races is the fact that I have several very fine friends of other racial groups. Have you ever known an outstanding Christian young person of a different race, Dick?

DICK: No, I can't say that I have; and to tell you the truth, I'm not very interested in knowing one.

JANE: But, Dick, you just said a moment ago that it is unreasonable to judge people by the color of their skin, and yet you are not willing to give yourself an opportunity to discover their true worth.

DICK: I suppose you're right. But aren't there some other ways of overcoming race prejudice?

BOB: Yes, Dick, there are. You were making use of one method when we came along—reading good books on the subject. The Bible has some very definite ideas about race relations, too. Finding out what the Bible has to say helps us to have Christian standards and ideals.

JANE: Prayer helps too, Dick. It's almost impossible to get rid of deep-seated prejudices by our own strength. We must ask God to help us.

DICK: I'll admit I've never prayed about the matter—or even thought very seriously about it before. I just took it for granted that most people feel the same way as I.

BOB: Many people do, Dick. Jane and I used to feel the same way too. We realize now that as Christian young people we have a responsibility for seeing that all racial groups in our country get a square deal. It's a bit inconsistent to send missionaries to other countries when we don't help the various racial groups in our own land. We certainly need the missionaries in other lands, but we also need to improve our race relationships at home.

DICK: You've got a point there, Bob. I'd never thought of it that way.

JANE: We should do all we can to help the minority groups in our

country, but it isn't just a matter of our helping them. All of the different racial groups have added their contribution to the folklore, music, arts, and crafts of America. In increasing measure they are contributing to our religious, scientific, economic, and industrial life. When they are given a fair chance to develop their abilities, their contribution will be even greater.

BOB: That was quite a speech, Jane! It ought to serve as the conclusion to our confab!

JANE (*Apologetically*): We really had no intention of preaching a sermon, Dick.

DICK: Make no apology, Jane! I'm glad we discussed the subject. I still have a long way to go before I arrive at the Christian point of view, but I'm going to think about these things—and pray about them, too.

BOB (*Rising to leave*): I've enjoyed our brief discussion too, Dick. Maybe we can continue it another time. So long.

DICK: So long, Bob. So long, Jane. See you later. (BOB and JANE *exeunt*.)

SCENE II:

(DICK, *slumped informally in his chair, is in deep thought*.)

DICK (*Thoughtfully*): They have something all right with their ideas about people of other races, but I still can't see it that way. (*Sits for a few moments in silent thought*.) It's strange that I can't get this thing off my mind! I never did go much for high-sounding ideas. I don't see why I can't forget the whole business!

(*At this point the SPIRIT OF GOOD WILL, a girl dressed in a white robe, appears before DICK*.)

DICK (*Startled*): I thought I was alone! Who are you, and why are you here?

SPIRIT OF GOOD WILL: I am the Spirit of Good Will. I represent the thousands of Christian youth who know that God has made of one blood all nations of men. They realize that our world must be one world and that, following the leadership of Jesus Christ, youth can help to make it so. I perceive that you desire to join this great throng of far-visioned youth, but that you still have prejudices in your heart which keep you from radiating the true Christian spirit of love and good will. Perhaps I can help you. May I read to you a story from this ancient scroll?

DICK: In some strange way you clearly understand my thoughts and feelings. Yes, read the story. I need your help.

SPIRIT OF GOOD WILL (*Reads slowly and impressively. DICK watches her intently throughout the reading of the story.*): A traveler with a face white like new-fallen snow journeyed along a winding highway toward a distant city. The traveler was very religious. Daily he read from a sacred Book—a Book that taught that all men were brothers, having a common Father. The white traveler pondered these sayings and said he believed them. Daily he knelt to pray to one whom he addressed as “Our Father.” Daily, too, he gazed at his own white face in the wayside brook when no one was looking, and he loved the fair image he saw reflected.

One day he met another traveler, who was journeying in the same direction. Both men drew aside, lest they touch each other’s garments. Because this other one’s face was yellow, the white man said to himself: “He is deceitful; he is treacherous. He must be because his face is not white like mine.” And the white man believed the things that he said to himself, and hated the yellow man intensely.

And the yellow man said of the white man: “He is proud and conceited and arrogant. I shall go my way alone.”

And neither looked closely to see what the other was really like.

The two travelers met others on the highway who were not as they were. They said of the brown ones: “They are cruel. They are wicked. They murder. They kill. We fear them because their faces are not like ours.”

And when the travelers met a black man, they said: “He is dangerous. He is not as good as we are. We know because his face is black and not like ours.”

All through the years the white traveler was very religious. Daily he read from the sacred Book. Daily he knelt to pray. And daily, in secret, he admired his own image as it was mirrored back to him from the crystal stream. And the black, the yellow, and the brown travelers kept to themselves likewise and would have naught to do with those of other races than their own.

As the years passed like a rosary of days and nights, all the travelers came closer to their destination. Each traveler hated more intensely all those not of his race and thought up good reasons for drawing away from them with ill-concealed loathing.

One day the travelers topped a rise on the road and quite suddenly found themselves within the gates of the city which had been their

goal for so many years. And the company of travelers was so large that there was not room for one man to draw away from another.

Then they found themselves passing through the center of the city. And there was in the midst of them a great Radiant Presence.

The white man cried, "Behold, how fair is the White King!"

The yellow man shouted, "Lo, the majestic Yellow King!"

The brown man called, "Hail, the mighty Brown King!"

The black man exulted, "Glory to the mighty Black King!"

But the white man stamped his foot and screamed, "No, no. He is white. I tell you the King is white."

And the black man shouted, "No, he is a black King. Black like I am!"

Then they all fell into a dispute as to the color of the great King. But the Radiant Presence interrupted them, saying, "Oh, my children, my children! How blind you are, blind with the earth dust that fills your eyes, so that you cannot see clearly. All these years you have loved the colors of your own faces so much that you have been blinded to the beauty of all other men's souls. All these years has color divided you.

"Half of the sweetness of life have you missed with your color blindness. Would the earth be half so lovely if everything were one hue? If all the leaves and all the flowers and all the sunsets were brown, how monotonous a place the earth would be! While you were on earth, did you draw away with loathing from the poppy because it was not yellow like the sunflower? Did you hate the grass because it was green instead of crystal clear like the stream?

"My little children, in this city color does not matter. Here it is only the heart that matters, and the radiance of the soul. Shake the earth dust from your eyes and look about you and tell me what you see."

And the yellow man looked at the brown man and whispered, "I see no color, only a shining radiance."

The white man looked at the black man and cried wonderingly, "I see no color, only a soul of shining beauty."

Then they who had thought of themselves as black and white and brown and yellow looked at each other deeply and said gently, "Brother, my brother."

And then they knelt down, all the radiant souls, and looked at the King. And behold, they saw him not as black or white or yellow

or brown, but as a Great Radiance, a Shining Soul. So kneeling together they murmured, "Our Father." ²

DICK (*Eagerly*): I see it! I see it now! Color is only skin deep. It is the heart that matters, and the radiance of the soul! I too have been blind with the dust of the earth!

SPIRIT OF GOOD WILL: You need me no longer. You have caught the vision glorious of love and good will to men of all nations and races. (*Exit SPIRIT OF GOOD WILL.*)

DICK (*Drops to his knees beside his chair and, looking upward, prays earnestly*): Dear Lord and Father of mankind, forgive my narrowness of soul and help me now to have a spirit of love and good will that includes all nations and races. Remove the earth dust from my eyes and help me to think, not in terms of color, but of the worth of a man's soul. In the name of Christ, the Redeemer of all men everywhere. Amen.

(*DICK continues in the attitude of prayer until the end of the service.*)

SOLO: Stanzas 1 and 2 of "In Christ There Is No East or West."

BENEDICTION (by leader):

Grant unto each one of us, O God, a glimpse of the vision glorious—that vision of the infinite worth of every human soul. May we have a more perfect love for thee and a more unselfish love for our fellow men. Lead us by thy Spirit into a greater understanding of thy truth.
AMEN.

3

A Nation's Strength

(Lincoln's or Washington's Birthday)

PRELUDE: "God of Our Fathers, Whose Almighty Hand."

CALL TO WORSHIP:

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.¹

PRAYER:

O God our Father, we thank thee that we may come to thee and that thou wilt renew our strength and our vision. We are grateful that our nation has had citizens and leaders in the past who have called upon thee for help and guidance. We pray for thy leadership for our land during the days ahead. Help us to know and follow those principles that will bring to our nation true strength and greatness. We pray in the name of Christ, our Redeemer. AMEN.

HYMN: "Be Strong! We Are Not Here to Play," or "Not Alone for Mighty Empire."

LEADER:

What makes a nation's pillars high
And its foundations strong?
What makes it mighty to defy
The foes that round it throng?

READER I:

It is not gold that makes a kingdom great. Solomon, king of Israel during the ninth century before Christ, was famous for the gold and silver, ivory and pearls which he accumulated. He constructed ornate

palaces and an elaborate temple. He built a port city, a fleet, gardens, vineyards, fountains, parks, and other amazing public works. Outwardly his kingdom was one of wealth and prosperity; inwardly it was crumbling to dust and ashes. Very soon after Solomon's death the kingdom was split asunder with only a small southern section remaining loyal to his son, King Rehoboam.

It is not gold. Its kingdoms grand
Go down in battle shock;
Its shafts are laid on sinking sand,
Not on abiding rock.

LEADER:

What is it, then, that makes a nation great and strong? Give us, we pray, a word of counsel and advice.

READER I:

It is not the sword that makes a nation strong. The powerful forces of Assyria destroyed the northern part of the kingdom that had been Solomon's, but 110 years later the Assyrian empire, lacking in inner stamina and survival power, was completely overrun by the conquering Babylonians. Later the Babylonians were overcome by Cyrus, king of Persia. The history of mankind abundantly substantiates the truth of the words of Jesus, "They that take the sword shall perish with the sword."

Is it the sword? Ask the red dust
Of empires passed away;
The blood has turned their stones to rust,
Their glory to decay.

LEADER:

Give us a goal to guide us and a word of hope to lead us on. What is it that makes a nation great and strong?

READER I:

It is not pride that makes a nation great. A wise man of old said that "pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." The apostle Paul, after enumerating some of the sins that had been committed by the Israelites at various points in their nation's history, made this thought-provoking statement: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." That admonition is

applicable to individuals as well as nations, and to modern nations as well as the nations of former centuries.

Jesus the Christ said: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven. . . . Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. . . . Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted."

And is it pride? Ah, that bright crown
Has seemed to nations sweet;
But God has struck its luster down
In ashes at His feet.

LEADER:

It is not gold; it is not the sword; it is not pride! What is it, then,
that gives a nation strength?

READER I:

It is men, women, and youth of moral integrity, inner stamina, and spiritual strength who make a nation strong. Such individuals have a vital faith in God and draw upon the resources of the Almighty. They live according to the moral and spiritual laws of the universe. They alone can make a nation great!

Not gold but only men can make
A people great and strong;
Men who for truth and honor's sake
Stand fast and suffer long.

Brave men who work while others sleep,
Who dare while others fly—
They build a nation's pillars deep
And lift them to the sky.²

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON

LEADER:

I see it now! The individual citizen is the key to a nation's greatness! Men and women, by their character, attitudes, and actions, determine what the history of their country shall be. Men in humble pursuits, as well as men in positions of great trust, decide the fate of their nation.

POEM:

God send us men whose aim 'twill be,
Not to defend some outworn creed,
But to live out the laws of Christ
In every thought and word and deed.

God send us men alert and quick
His lofty precepts to translate
Until the laws of Christ become
The laws and habits of the state.

God send us men of steadfast will,
Patient, courageous, strong and true;
With vision clear and mind equipped
His will to learn, His work to do.

God send us men with hearts ablaze,
All truth to love, all wrong to hate;
These are the patriots nations need,
These are the bulwarks of the state.³

—FREDERICK F. GILLMAN

LEADER:

Our nation has been blessed by men who have embodied this ideal. The tribute to George Washington which is inscribed at Mount Vernon eloquently testifies that he was a man of great character and faith. Fortunate indeed are we that such a man was the founder of our country!

READER II:

Washington, the brave, the wise, the good.
Supreme in war, in council, and in peace.
Valiant without ambition, discreet without fear, confident without presumption.
In disaster, calm; in success, moderate; in all, himself.
The hero, the patriot, the Christian.
The father of nations, the friend of mankind,
Who, when he had won all, renounced all, and sought in the bosom of his family and of nature, retirement, and in the hope of religion, immortality.

LEADER:

The immortal words from Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address are abundant evidence that here too was a man of true charity and greatness. Twice fortunate are we to have had this man as our leader at the time of the greatest crisis in the history of our nation.

READER II:

With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and orphans, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.

LEADER:

On another occasion Abraham Lincoln answered the question regarding the source of a nation's strength with amazing clarity and insight.

READER II:

What constitutes the bulwark of our liberty and independence? It is not our frowning battlements, our bristling seacoasts, the guns of our war steamers, or the strength of our gallant army. . . .

Our reliance is in the love of liberty which God has planted in our bosoms. Our defence is in the preservation of the spirit which prizes liberty as the heritage of *all men, in all lands everywhere*. Destroy this spirit and you have planted the seeds of despotism around your own doors.⁴

LEADER:

A great American of our own century also gives us a clear-as-crystal answer to the question, What makes a nation great?

READER II:

America first, not only in things material,
But in things of the spirit.
Not merely in science, invention, motors, skyscrapers,
But also in ideals, principles, character.
Not merely in the calm assertion of rights,
But in the glad assumption of duties.
Not flouting her strength as a giant,

But bending in helpfulness over a sick and wounded world like a
good Samaritan.
Not in splendid isolation,
But in courageous co-operation.
Not in pride, arrogance, and disdain of other races and peoples,
But in sympathy, love, and understanding.
Not in treading again the old, worn, bloody pathway which ends
inevitably in chaos and disaster,
But blazing a new trail along which, please God, other nations will
follow into the new Jerusalem where wars shall be no more.
Some day, some nation must take that path—unless we are to lapse
into utter barbarism—and that honor I covet for my beloved America.
And so in that spirit and with these hopes, I say with all my heart
and soul, "America First."⁵

—G. ASHTON OLDHAM

HYMN: "O Beautiful for Spacious Skies."

CLOSING PRAYER:

Dear Father in heaven, we praise thee for the heritage of faith and vision and freedom that is ours as Americans. Help us to realize more clearly than ever before that the future of our nation is in the hands of the individual citizens of this land. May we be deeply aware that America can fulfill her mission in the world only if her citizens have the vision, courage, and ideals that come from a vital faith in Jesus Christ. In the name of him who is the hope of our nation and every nation. AMEN.

RESPONSE (sung softly by entire group):

America! America!

God shed his grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea. Amen.

—KATHARINE L. BATES

4

Adding More Meaning to Lent

PRELUDE: "Beneath the Cross of Jesus."

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.¹

HYMN: "In the Cross of Christ I Glory."

LEADER:

For many centuries Lent was a period of fasting preparatory to the festival of Easter. It was supposed to be an exercise in discipline and self-denial, and as such had some value. Gradually, however, it became for many people a ritualistic observance that had very little spiritual purpose or meaning.

There are those who give up during Lent an undesirable habit, only to resume the questionable practice as soon as Easter is over. This is a violation of conscience and an insult to Christ, in whose honor Lent is observed. Others give up certain luxuries during Lent, only to spend the money thus saved on other selfish pleasures or pursuits for themselves. Or they may overindulge after Easter in the same luxury of which they "deprived" themselves during Lent. This too is a mockery of the true principle of sacrifice and self-denial. If we would observe the period of Lent, let us observe it in ways that are spiritually enriching. Let us add more meaning to Lent.

PRAYER:

Dear God, our Father, we confess to thee our selfishness, our shallowness, and our sin. Forgive us for living ordinary lives when thou hast called us to a life of high endeavor and daring service. During this

Lenten season may we catch a new glimpse of the abundant, victorious life which thou hast made available through thy Son Jesus Christ. In his name we pray. AMEN.

LEADER:

If we would add more meaning to Lent, we must think first of all of the one who gave his life on Calvary. Only as we realize more fully the significance of the supreme sacrifice which he made, can we manifest in our lives a spirit of true sacrifice and self-denial.

RESPONSE (by entire group, or as solo or duet):

Saviour, thy dying love
Thou gavest me,
Nor should I aught withhold,
Dear Lord, from thee;
In love my soul would bow,
My heart, fulfill its vow,
Some off'ring bring thee now,
Something for thee.

LEADER:

The way of Christ and the Cross is the way of true meaning, purpose, and joy in living. We must think of a cross which we may bear—a cross of sacrifice for others.

RESPONSE:

At the blest mercy seat,
Pleading for me,
My feeble faith looks up,
Jesus, to thee;
Help me the cross to bear,
Thy wondrous love declare,
Some song to raise, or prayer,
Something for thee.

LEADER:

Each day must be a day of sacrifice and service. The principle of the Cross must become our way of life—our way of thinking, living, speaking.

RESPONSE:

Give me a faithful heart,
Likeness to thee,

That each departing day
Henceforth may see
Some work of love begun,
Some deed of kindness done,
Some wand'rer sought and won,
Something for thee.

LEADER:

All that we are and have must be presented to the Master for his use. He that would save his life shall lose it, but he that loses his life—in service for Christ and others—shall save it.

RESPONSE:

All that I am and have,
Thy gifts so free,
In joy, in grief, through life,
Dear Lord, for thee!
And when thy face I see,
My ransomed soul shall be,
Thro' all eternity,
Something for thee.

—SYLVANUS D. PHELPS

STORY:

SACRIFICE ON PANAY

IMMEDIATELY before Pearl Harbor the Philippine Baptist Mission was a beehive of activity. When the news of the Pearl Harbor attack stunned the world, twenty-one missionaries were at their posts, most of them on the island of Panay. Of this number, ten were interned by the rapidly advancing Japanese, but eleven fled to a previously selected retreat in the mountains. They felt that they could thus carry on their ministry of healing and teaching among the remote villagers of the mountain areas.

Who were these eleven heroic messengers of Jesus Christ who deliberately chose the way of Calvary—the way of sacrifice and suffering? They were men and women of long experience in missionary service. Dr. and Mrs. Frederick Meyer had served at Emmanuel Hospital on the island of Panay for twenty-three years. Theirs was not only a ministry of healing, but also a beautiful ministry of music. Mrs. Meyer reached the hearts of all who heard her sing, and Dr. Meyer directed

a number of choral groups. Miss Jennie Adams had served with Dr. and Mrs. Meyer as a nurse and as head of the nurses' training department at Emmanuel Hospital for nineteen years—an earnest, consecrated servant of the Master.

Dr. and Mrs. Howard Rose ministered heroically for twenty-six years at Central Philippine College on Panay Island, being largely responsible for the development of this worthy Christian institution. Dr. Rose was a preacher, teacher, administrator, scientist, poet, musician, organ builder, philanthropist, and friend—a human dynamo of energy and activity. Miss Dorothy Dowell and Miss Signe Erickson were in charge of the missionary training school which is a part of Central Philippine College. Miss Dowell had served devotedly for twenty-two years, while Miss Erickson had given twelve years of sacrificial service.

Mr. and Mrs. James Covell served nobly for sixteen years at Mabie College in Yokohama, Japan, and for four years at Central Philippine College. It was their devotion to peace and the way of love that led to their removal, under Japanese government duress, from Japan. But they undertook another mission for Christ; and in the Philippines, as in Japan, they endeared themselves to everyone by their radiant spirit and loving service.

Mr. and Mrs. Erle Rounds labored for twelve years as evangelistic missionaries among the primitive mountain people of the island of Panay, manifesting a rugged, pioneering spirit and a splendid devotion to the task of sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. Their nine-year-old son, Erle Douglas, accompanied them when they fled to the mountains.

The retreat which became the hiding place of these eleven soldiers of the Cross was located at the top of a mountain in deep recesses of evergreens and was reached only by winding and misleading trails. It was near the remote tribal village of Kalipunan, which some ten years before had been transformed by the preaching of the gospel from a village of primitive, heathen tribesmen to a well-ordered Christian community. These native Christians became the loyal underground, supplying food for the missionaries and protecting them from surprise attacks by the Japanese soldiers. Three times, when Japanese patrols were near, they hid the missionaries, one by one, in caves or deep thickets on the mountainside.

The missionary refugees named their hiding place "Hopevale," and here for twenty months they lived and labored, prayed and hoped. A few letters reached America by circuitous routes from these courageous Christians. These letters give a little glimpse of their life of privation

and suffering at Hopevale. They lived in grass huts with bamboo floors and ate the food supplied by the Christian natives: rice at every meal, greens, bananas, sometimes eggs and chicken. Clothing was exceedingly scarce, and they often went barefoot, especially in wet weather, to save their well-worn shoes. Eleven valiant messengers of Christ, barefoot in the forest and in the rain, in constant danger of discovery and death, and yet daily ministering to lowly mountaineers, daily praying and praising their God!

One letter told about the little chapel which was built by the missionaries in a "beautiful, deep dry gorge with giant trees growing in it." Here these fugitives of the Cross worshiped together every Sunday—except on a few Sundays when the Japanese soldiers were near. Other Americans who were in hiding in the mountains joined them in worship; and on Easter Sunday, 1943, about a hundred worshipers were in attendance at the service in Hopevale chapel! It was at this same Easter service that the thirteen-year-old son of an American couple who were refugees in the mountains was baptized by Dr. Rose in a near-by mountain stream.

From reports that have reached America it seems that a few Japanese soldiers knew where the missionaries were hiding and decided not to molest them. Other troops persistently searched for the retreat. Finally a detachment of soldiers came to the village of Katipunan. The people of the village at great risk to themselves refused to give any information. The search continued, however, and the mountain retreat was eventually located.

The fateful day of discovery was—of all days—December 19, 1943, which was Christmas Sunday. Dr. Meyer and Miss Dowell had been ministering to native Filipinos in outlying villages and, desiring to spend Christmas with their friends and loved ones, had just returned to the mountain hiding place. In the afternoon the eleven missionaries, along with several other Americans, had gathered in the little chapel at Hopevale for the singing of Christmas carols. They were taken by complete surprise when the Japanese soldiers surrounded the chapel. Some of the men might have escaped in the dense mountain wilderness, but when the women and children were taken into custody, all surrendered.

Either that same day or the next they were told that they would be put to death. Mr. and Mrs. Covell, aided by knowledge gained from their many years of missionary service in Japan, conversed fluently with the Japanese soldiers. They pleaded for the lives of all, giving

eloquent testimony of their mission as messengers of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The soldiers were affected by the appeal but said that they must carry out their orders.

The missionaries then requested that they be given time for prayer. Their request was granted; and these Christian heroes, like the martyrs of old, knelt before the Throne of Grace to commit their souls to God. After praying for about an hour they rose from their knees and said to the Japanese officer, "Now we are ready!" And then they knelt again, this time for the final tragic act that brought them into the glorious presence of their Lord.

Surely these eleven Christian martyrs shared Christ's Gethsemane and tasted of the cup of Calvary. They had chosen the way of the Cross—in life and in death. In life they had given a total of 215 years of sacrificial missionary service; in death they gave, in a spirit of prayer and courageous devotion, their final glowing testimony for Jesus Christ. Undoubtedly that final testimony will bring about the conversion of some of the very soldiers who put them to death. It will surely result in the evangelizing of hundreds of Filipinos, for whom the tremendous sacrifice was made, and of countless others, as the story of their martyrdom is relayed around the world.

The Filipino Christians have placed a beautiful memorial in the form of a cross over the common grave of the missionary martyrs. How appropriate! Only the cross of Calvary could symbolize the sacrifice and self-surrender which characterized the way in which these eleven soldiers of Jesus Christ valiantly lived and nobly died.

SOLO: "'Are Ye Able,' Said the Master."

PERIOD OF GUIDED MEDITATION:

The pianist may continue playing softly as the leader asks the following questions, giving time for silent prayer and meditation after each question.

1. During this period of Lent are we thinking of Christ and his sacrifice for us on Calvary?
2. Are we praying that the way of the Cross, the way of sacrificial service, may be manifested in our lives by our words, attitudes, and deeds?
3. Are we spending more time in prayer, meditation, and Bible study during this Lenten season?
4. Are we giving more thought to the true significance and meaning of the Christian life?

5. Are the cross and the resurrection of Christ more meaningful to us as a result of our observance of Lent?

6. As we think of the heroic sacrifice that was made on the island of Panay, can we honestly say that we have made a sacrifice for the cause of Jesus Christ?

7. Is there any true sacrifice—of time, money, strength, or energy—which we as young people can make for Christ during this Lenten season?

CLOSING PRAYER:

Dear God, our hearts are deeply stirred as we think of the glorious testimony of thy servants on the island of Panay. Because of their sacrifice and devotion may we have a deeper understanding of the meaning of Calvary. May this Lenten season take on new significance for each of us because we have seen the principle of the Cross so nobly demonstrated in their lives. Help us to give more of our time, our strength, our talents, and our possessions to the advancement of thy kingdom around the world. May the way of the Cross become our way of life, so that each day is for us a day of surrender to thee and sacrificial service to others. In the name of Christ, who loved us and gave his life for us. AMEN.

RESPONSE (as a solo): Refrain of “‘Are Ye Able,’ Said the Master.”

BENEDICTION:

Now unto him who shall supply all your needs according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus, unto our Father, be glory for ever and ever. AMEN.

5

Discovering the King

(*Palm Sunday*)

PRELUDE: "The Palms" by Joseph Leybach.

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. . . . I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. . . . Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.¹

PRAYER:

We thank thee, O God, for Jesus, the ever-living, ever-reigning Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords. Help us to understand that his Kingdom is a spiritual Kingdom which shall endure through all the ages of eternity. May we discover the Christ in a vital personal way, so that he may become the King and Redeemer of our lives. In his name we pray. AMEN.

HYMN: "Crown Him with Many Crowns," or "Lead On, O King Eternal."

SCRIPTURE: Luke 19:29-42.

LEADER:

A simple drama based on the triumphal entry of Christ into Jerusalem and the events immediately following will help us understand the true meaning of the spiritual kingdom which Christ came to establish. This dramatic presentation is entitled "The King and His Kingdom." The characters are Mathias and Mordecai, two young men of Jesus' day, and Miriam, the sister of Mordecai. The first scene takes place at the close of that first Palm Sunday, when Christ was ac-

claimed by the multitudes as he rode into Jerusalem. Mordecai and Mathias are discussing the events of the day.

DRAMATIC PRESENTATION:

THE KING AND HIS KINGDOM

SCENE I:

(MORDECAI and MATHIAS enter and sit together informally.)

MORDECAI: Well, Mathias, this has been a great day in the history of our nation.

MATHIAS: Then you believe that this Jesus of Nazareth is the long-awaited Messiah?

MORDECAI: Didn't you hear the multitudes acclaim him as their king? "Hosanna, hosanna," they were shouting. "Blessed is the king that cometh in the name of the Lord!"

MATHIAS: Yes, Mordecai, I heard them. But what kind of king were they shouting for? What kind of Messiah do you expect, Mordecai?

MORDECAI (*Impatiently*): That's a foolish question, Mathias. All our people are looking for a Messiah who will re-establish the kingdom of Israel in Jerusalem. We long for a leader who will help us throw off the yoke of Rome.

MATHIAS: (*Slowly*) Then I'm afraid it is not Jesus of Nazareth whom you want as your Messiah. You and the others who followed him today do not really want him for your king.

MORDECAI: What do you mean?

MATHIAS: Did you observe the face of Jesus today? Do you think that he looked the part of a haughty military leader?

MORDECAI: Well, I'll admit he could have made a more impressive entrance into the city if he had displayed a little more pomp and ceremony. No, I didn't give special attention to the expression on his face.

MATHIAS: (*Earnestly*) I did, Mordecai, and it was not the face of a proud and arrogant king. There were lines of sorrow on his face. He had a look of compassion—almost of pity—for those crowds who were acclaiming him their king but who had no understanding of his teachings.

MORDECAI: We have seen the miracles he has performed. Why worry about his words when he has the power to put Rome in her place?

MATHIAS: Mordecai, you are as blind as the rest of the multitudes. Have

you ever listened to this man's teachings? Do you know what he's been saying?

MORDECAI: I've heard him from a distance several times—couldn't exactly get the jist of what he was saying. I'm more interested in these miraculous deeds he's been performing. But now that you've made such an issue of it, what are some of the things he's been teaching?

MATHIAS: His teachings are strange and difficult, Mordecai. "Love your enemies," he has said. "Bless them which persecute you. Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also."

MORDECAI: (*With amazement*) It can't be, Mathias! We've got to avenge these Romans someway. Are you sure he has been teaching these things?

MATHIAS: These and many other difficult things. "Blessed are the meek," he says. "Blessed are the poor in spirit. Blessed are the peacemakers." Where would your revenge against the Romans come in a program like that? Do you think that the multitudes who followed him today intend to live according to these principles?

MIRIAM: (*Joins MORDECAI and MATHIAS*) I heard your question about the Master, Mathias. I was one of those who followed him today, and I earnestly desire to live according to his teachings.

MORDECAI: (*Sharply*) You are only a young girl, Miriam. What do you know about these things?

MIRIAM: (*Patiently*) I have listened intently to the Master's words day after day. He has even talked to me on several occasions. He has brought great joy and peace to my life. Just what type of kingdom he will set up I do not know, but I firmly believe that he is the Messiah.

MATHIAS: Very few have listened to his teachings as earnestly as you have, Miriam. Whether or not he is the Messiah I am not fully convinced. But I know that he is a great teacher and prophet. His words have a strange, magnetic appeal and have caused me to spend much time in deep thought. And I am sure that the kingdom of which he speaks is far removed from a kingdom of military might and power.

MORDECAI: I am still not convinced that a man of such great power will not use it for the deliverance of his people from Roman bondage. Both of you have doubtless read meanings into his words which he did not intend.

MIRIAM: Then listen to his teachings for yourself, Mordecai. I have heard that he will be speaking this week in the temple. Will you go to hear him?

MORDECAI: I will hear him. I will discover for myself what this man has been saying. Then we will discuss the matter again. (*Exeunt.*)

LEADER:

On the Tuesday following the triumphal entry Jesus spent the entire day teaching in the court of the temple. Mordecai and Mathias are in earnest conversation on the evening of that day.

SCENE II:

(MORDECAI and MATHIAS enter and sit together informally, followed by MIRIAM, who sits to one side but who listens intently to the conversation.)

MORDECAI: I heard this man Jesus teach in the temple today. You are right, Mathias; his words have a strange appeal. All day I listened to him. I was near enough to study his face, too. There is something compelling and irresistible about the man.

MATHIAS: What about his teachings, Mordecai?

MORDECAI: That is the strangest part of all. He does not speak like the scribes and Pharisees and other leaders of our people. "He that humbleth himself," he said, "shall be exalted, but he that exalteth himself shall be abased." I have never heard that idea expressed by any of the scribes.

MATHIAS: His teaching and that of the scribes are as far removed as the east is from the west. Didn't you hear his words of condemnation of the scribes and Pharisees?

MORDECAI: I have never heard such fearless words! It is all so confusing. How can he be the Messiah when the leaders of our people have completely rejected him?

MIRIAM: (*Unable to remain quiet longer, she joins the two young men, sits on a stool at their feet, and speaks earnestly.*) Oh, Mordecai, I think it is all to his credit that the scribes and Pharisees will have nothing to do with him. They are jealous of his words of authority and of the way great crowds are thronging after him to hear his message. They have led us away from the true teachings of our prophets; they have emphasized unimportant ceremonies and failed to teach and demonstrate the weightier matters of the law: justice, righteousness, and humility.

MORDECAI: (*Reprovingly*) For a young girl you are very disrespectful of your elders, Miriam.

MATHIAS: But she is right, Mordecai. I am convinced after hearing Jesus of Nazareth that the scribes and Pharisees are not worthy of being the leaders of our people. Jesus showed amazing courage when he chased the corrupt money-changers from the temple and when he so convincingly exposed the hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees.

MORDECAI: It took courage, all right, but it certainly isn't increasing his popularity.

MATHIAS: Obviously it isn't popular acclaim that he seeks. That is why he had such a look of deep sorrow and compassion when the crowds were rejoicing as he entered Jerusalem. In fact, I think he knows full well that his exposure of the scribes and Pharisees will lead to his death. He is that steadfast in his determination to be true to his convictions. For a long time the scribes and Pharisees have been plotting to bring about his death. They will redouble their efforts now.

MORDECAI: That makes it all the more baffling and confusing. I know not what to believe about this man. How can he set up any type of kingdom if he is put to death?

MIRIAM: (*Earnestly*) There is much that I do not understand about the Master. But this one thing I know: even if he is put to death, he will still be the Messiah. Haven't you read the words of the prophet Isaiah: "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. . . . Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows. . . . He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. . . . His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace"? Surely these words refer to the coming of the Messiah.

MATHIAS: (*Deeply impressed by the words of MIRIAM*) You have great insight, Miriam. How blind we have been! I have read those words dozens of times without perceiving their true meaning. I still do not understand them fully, but this Jesus must be the Messiah whom our prophets have foretold!

MORDECAI: (*Slowly*): It is all so strange—so very strange. I cannot understand it, but it must be true!

MIRIAM: (*Joyfully*): It *is* true! Jesus of Nazareth *is* the long-awaited Redeemer! My heart tells me so!

(*Pianist may begin playing very softly at the beginning of MATHIAS'*

last speech, and the soloist should sing immediately at the close of MIRIAM's final speech. MORDECAI, MATHIAS, and MIRIAM should remain in position until the end of the solo.)

SOLO: "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name."

LEADER:

Palm Sunday is not the final chapter in the life of Christ. The events of Holy Week, culminating in the cross of Calvary, are not the last word. Let us rejoice that we have the message of Easter, God's greatest word of hope for mankind!

How much more difficult it would be to discover the King and to understand the meaning of his Kingdom if we were looking at Jesus from the other side of the Cross and the Resurrection. Fortunately, we have a far better vantage point. We have the Easter message of victory and hope. We know of the tremendous influence Christ has exerted on the history of mankind. It should not be difficult for us to discover Christ as Lord and King. Have you made that all-important discovery? Do you know Christ personally—as your Saviour and Friend, as the King of your life? If not, pray earnestly for guidance and help to make that thrilling discovery now!

PERIOD OF SILENT PRAYER: (The pianist may play softly "More Love to Thee, O Christ.")

HYMN (to be sung softly by entire group): "More Love to Thee, O Christ."

CLOSING PRAYER:

O Christ, we earnestly desire to know thee better and to love thee more devotedly. Remove from our lives all sinful thoughts and selfish desires that separate us from thee. Help us to dedicate our time and strength more completely to thy service. Be thou the King and Redeemer of our lives. AMEN.

6

He Is Risen

(*Easter*)

PRELUDE: Violin solo, "Meditation" from *Thaïs* by Massenet.

HYMN: "Low in the Grave He Lay."

(Lights are turned out at the beginning of the last stanza. A dim light is thrown on the picture "He Is Risen" by Plockhorst, which has been placed in the front of the room. Gradually the light becomes brighter, and as the final words "Hallelujah! Christ arose!" are sung, a bright light is focused on the picture. This is the only light used during the remainder of the service.)

CALL TO WORSHIP:

A song of sunshine through the rain,
Of spring across the snow;
A balm to heal the hurts of pain,
A peace surpassing woe.
Lift up your heads, ye sorrowing ones,
And be ye glad of heart,
For Calvary and Easter Day
Were just three days apart!

—AUTHOR UNKNOWN

LEADER:

In order to understand more fully the tremendous significance of the Easter message we will think of both Calvary and Easter. The triumph of Easter takes on new meaning when we think of the tragedy of Calvary, and certainly Calvary is incomplete without the message of Easter. It is wonderfully reassuring to remember that Calvary and Easter are just three days apart!

READER I:

And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews? And they

cried out again, Crucify him. Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil hath he done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him. And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified.¹

READER II:

It happened on an April day,
Bounded by skies so blue and still,
And olive trees all hushed and gray,
They led One up a skull-shaped hill
Followed by a crowd whose piercing cry
Was, "Crucify!"

READER I:

And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left. Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots. And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God. And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar, And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself. And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.²

READER II:

It happened on an April morn,
They nailed a Man upon a tree
Whose head was circled with sharp thorn,
Lifted Him high that all might see
His agony, His heaving breath,
His awful death.

READER I:

Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away,

and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.³

READER II:

It happened on an April day
They tombed a Man (the crowd had fled)
Sealed it; and set a watch that way
To flout His words; to prove Him dead;
And show Himself He could not save
From the dark grave.

READER I:

And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun. And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great. And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted. And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him.⁴

READER II:

It happened on an April day . . .
A tremor shook the paling gloom,
A white flame tore the door away,
Life came a victor from the tomb.
Love cannot die, nor truth betray. . . .
Christ rose upon an April day! ⁵

—JOHN RICHARD MORELAND

HYMN (joyously): "Christ the Lord Is Risen Today."

PICTURE INTERPRETATION:

"HE IS RISEN"

How GREAT and wonderful is the Easter message! As we think upon this glorious message, what shall be our feelings and our attitudes toward

it? What are the moods of Easter? What actions and reactions occur in the soul as we stand in the dazzling presence of the Easter fact?

No one has portrayed the moods of Easter more vividly than Plockhorst in his picture "He Is Risen." The scene is at the tomb. Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome are there, as we have heard in the Scripture reading. What are the three moods which this picture reveals?

1. First there is bewilderment. With great skill the artist has stamped this mood upon the face of Salome. (Point out Salome in the picture.) This is the first Easter mood. These women set out in bewilderment—bewilderment at the whole meaning of the trying scenes through which they passed, bewilderment at Christ's death, bewilderment as to the moving of the stone, bewilderment as to the meaning of death. Bewilderment is the first and lowest of the Easter moods. It haunted the hearts of these women as they set out for the tomb; and now as she stands in the presence of the angel's glad announcement, the face of Salome still bears the imprint of her bewilderment. We all do well to be bewildered in the presence of the greatest mysteries of life and death. Only to the fool is everything clear. How strange death is! It does cause bewilderment to us all. But in God, through Christ, we know that life is master of death. The resurrection tomb is the answer to our bewilderment.

2. The second mood at Easter is that of amazement. What is the angel saying? "He is risen." These words gave to Mary the mother of James the second Easter mood—amazement. Plockhorst has stamped on her face the breathless gaze of tiptoe wonder. Almost in fear, she lays her hand upon Salome. Hearing the angel's glad announcement, "He is not here; he is risen," provided sufficient cause for breath-taking awe. These words are enough to fan forever the flame of wonder in the hearts of mortals. The women did well to be amazed, and men have been amazed ever since. The resurrection tomb is Christ's glad message to the world that the spiritual forces are the predominant and ultimately victorious forces in the universe. It awakened amazement in the hearts of these women. It has never ceased to create wonder and will do so until that glad day when we shall be with Jesus.

3. The third Easter mood expressed in this picture is the greatest and highest of all. It is the mood of exultation—supreme joy and thanksgiving. Exultation is gloriously expressed in the face and figure of Mary Magdalene as she kneels in adoration and in glad praise. It is expressed also in the words of the angel, "Behold the place where the

Lord lay." The tense is past—"where the Lord lay." He is there no longer, for he is risen. What an hour of exultation and rejoicing when the women realized the truth of those words, Christ is risen! The one whom they loved has conquered death—even the death of the cross—and is alive! What a glorious triumph for them and for us! A living Christ, a living King! One who conquered the gloom of death and came forth triumphantly the King of kings and the Lord of lords! These are the glad feelings of Easter Day. Bewilderment gives way to amazement, and amazement becomes exultation.

What cause there is for all of us to rejoice, for the Risen Christ still reigns! ⁶

He is risen, he is risen!

Tell it out with joyful voice:

He has burst his three days' prison;

Let the whole wide earth rejoice:

Death is conquered, man is free

Christ has won the victory!

—CECIL F. ALEXANDER

LEADER:

Easter is the most reassuring message the world has ever known. It takes on its true significance, however, when it becomes meaningful in the lives of individuals. What does the Easter message mean to youth today, to you and to me? Let us think of the meaning of Easter to each one of us individually.

PERIOD OF GUIDED MEDITATION (piano and violin playing softly "I Know That My Redeemer Lives"):

LEADER (give time for silent meditation and prayer between the following statements):

"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." ⁷

The Easter message is at the very center and core of our salvation. It should give us a living, vital faith in him who has triumphed over sin and death.

"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. . . . O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" ⁸

The Easter message is the basis of our firm and steadfast hope of life

beyond the grave. This hope should give meaning, purpose, and motivation to our lives. This hope can take our Calvaries and turn them into Easter mornings.

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." ⁹

We have missed the full message of Easter unless that message makes a difference in the quality of our living. "Seek those things which are above." "Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ." ¹⁰ "Walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called." ¹¹ "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith." ¹²

All of these great truths are a part of the Easter message. May that message speak directly to the heart of each one of us.

SOLO: "I Know That My Redeemer Lives."

CLOSING PRAYER:

We thank thee, O Christ, for the Easter message of triumph over sin and death. Give each one of us a more perfect faith in thee. Help us to show by the quality of our living that we have been raised with thee and that we are walking with thee in newness of life. In the name of Christ, the author and perfecter of our faith. AMEN.

7

Truth Will Rise Again

(*Easter*)

PRELUDE: "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name."

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Thou art the Way: to thee alone
From sin and death we flee;
And he who would the Father seek
Must seek him, Lord, by thee.

Thou art the Truth: thy Word alone
True wisdom can impart;
Thou only canst inform the mind,
And purify the heart.

Thou art the Life: the rending tomb
Proclaims thy conquering arm;
And those who put their trust in thee
Nor death nor hell shall harm.

Thou art the Way, the Truth, the Life:
Grant us that way to know,
That truth to keep, that life to win,
Whose joys eternal flow.¹

—GEORGE WASHINGTON DOANE

PRAYER:

O Christ, our Redeemer, we praise thee because thou art the Way, the Truth, and the Life. We praise thee because in thee the deepest longings of our hearts are satisfied. Thou hast brought meaning and purpose and motivation to our lives. Thou dost understand the yearnings and questions and aspirations of youth. Thou art our Leader. To thee we may turn for guidance, courage, comfort, and inspiration. Thou art our Saviour and Redeemer. We confess our littleness and our

selfishness to thee. We know that thou canst forgive our sin, for thou hast conquered sin and death. Thou art our ever-living, ever-reigning King; and because thou dost reign, we know that truth and righteousness will never die. Because thou art our Leader, Saviour, Redeemer, and King, we give to thee anew our love, our allegiance, our lives, our all. AMEN.

HYMN: "The Day of Resurrection," or "Christ the Lord Is Risen Today."

SCRIPTURE:

Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father. . . . I and my Father are one.²

POEM:

O Christ, the Way, the Truth, the Life,
Show me the living way,
That in the tumult and the strife
I may not go astray.

Teach me thy truth, O Christ, my Light,
The Truth that makes me free,
That in the darkness and the night
My trust shall be in thee.

The Life that thou alone canst give,
Impart in love to me,
That I may in thy presence live,
And ever be like thee.

—GEORGE L. SQUIER

SOLO OR DUET: "Lord of All Being, Throned Afar," or "Crown Him with Many Crowns."

SCRIPTURE:

Then Pilate entered in to the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews? Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. Pilate saith unto him, What is truth?

Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him. Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man! When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him. The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.

When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid; and went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer. Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin. And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar.

When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth. . . . But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar. Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away.³

LEADER:

Christ is the way to God; he is the truth about God. He is the truth about life. The mysteries of the universe find their solution in him. The laws of the universe—physical, moral, and spiritual—center in him. Christ's way is written into the center and core of all creation. In him all things consist or hold together.

Men through the centuries have experienced a deep longing to know the truth about life and death. Christ is God's answer to that longing. Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea, felt this same yearning to know the truth. When Jesus told him that he had come into the world to bear witness unto the truth, Pilate, revealing his inner restlessness, asked wistfully, "What is truth?" Pilate did not discover, until it was too late, that truth stood there before him in the person of Jesus Christ.

STORY:

WHEN PILATE HEARD THE NEWS

IT HAD been a bad day for Pontius Pilate, governor of Jerusalem. Those hotheaded Jews, always a difficult people to rule, had been more than ordinarily restless and troublesome of late. Nothing that a governor could do seemed to please them. Great festivals, such as those provided for the populace by Caesar back in Rome, were held in fine contempt by these fanatics. Gladiatorial combats, so popular among the Romans, were simply out of the question with these people. Entertainments and public buildings, eminently satisfactory elsewhere in the empire, seemed only to widen the breach between the government and the people. To make matters worse, there had been an epidemic of banditry and rebellion in Palestine ever since Pilate had arrived to take charge of the province.

One of the most difficult situations of all had arisen just two days ago. A young carpenter had stirred up the Jewish leaders to a frenzy over some silly religious matter. On nothing were the Jews more touchy than on matters of religion, and this man had offended the priests and teachers with his revolutionary ideas.

This young carpenter had taken matters into his own hands a few days earlier and created a scene in the temple over the selling of sheep and pigeons inside the sacred precincts. As a matter of fact, everybody had known about the graft connected with the business for a long time, but most people had come to accept it as a matter of course. Some rather important people had an interest in the system, and the young man's surprise attack had thoroughly aroused the business interests

of the community. The result was that the priests and dignitaries of the Jews came into Pilate's court, clamoring and threatening and demanding that the young carpenter be executed.

Pilate had gone into the matter rather perfunctorily and in all probability would have dismissed the case, but the Jews made an extremely uncomfortable issue out of it by charging the carpenter with treason. "He calls himself a king," they reported, and this naturally had to be investigated.

The governor was much inclined to befriend the young man, for he had heard about him from his own wife, Claudia. She reported that he was a man of strange and winsome power, who seemed able to answer the deep questions that eager souls kept asking. Claudia, of course, was a woman, and women are expected to be a bit emotional.

Still, Pilate had secretly wished he might ask the young man a few questions himself. There were some strange stirrings in his own heart that the Roman philosophers had never been able to explain. When the young man came before him for trial, however, he had been quite noncommittal, as if he did not think he would be understood, even if he did talk.

There was one remark he had dropped, though, that Pilate had not been able to forget. "My kingdom is a kingdom of truth," the carpenter had said. Somehow that remark would not down. Pilate had been thinking about it ever since. A thousand times—even sometimes in the midst of a difficult case—he had found himself thinking about the young man, his remarkable face, and that cryptic remark. And always he returned to the same question, "What is truth?"

Even at the time it had not seemed like a very just decision, but the Jews were so clamorous and threatening, and the young man had seemed to be of no particular importance, that Pilate, in spite of a solemn warning from his wife, had finally issued an order for his execution. Life under Rome was always cheap, and it seemed better for one man to die than for the entire city to be plunged into an uproar. But from the time the carpenter disappeared through the doors of the judgment hall and was led off to Calvary for crucifixion, Pilate had not been able to get him off his mind.

The day of the crucifixion had seemed a day of weird fates. Suddenly, in the midst of the afternoon, a deep darkness had mysteriously spread over the city, plunging it into inky blackness. The earth had shaken until buildings reeled and tottered like drunken men. Panic reigned throughout the city.

A young priest, hurrying over from the high priest's house, had brought a message imploring a double guard over the grave of the young carpenter, for, said he, "It is said that this man has promised that he will rise from the grave after three days, and we do not want his disciples stealing his body and pretending a resurrection."

Though Pilate had no patience with the Jews' religion, he was smart enough to sense what it would mean to the city to have any such rumor circulated. It seemed that this youth would not be dismissed, even by death! A guard therefore was placed at the tomb, and the governor's seal affixed to the stone before the entrance of the tomb.

And now, two days later, the governor was returning from his court. His step was that of a man tired beyond endurance. The day had not been so different from other days, but the load on his mind was becoming unendurable. "What is truth? What is truth?" He had asked the question over and over.

Suddenly an excited courier came hurriedly down the corridor. "My Lord," he gasped breathlessly in a frantic effort to appear calm, "*he is alive!*"

Pilate's heart stood still. Speech for a second seemed an impossibility. Then, summoning a calm he could only pretend, he asked, "Who is alive?" But his voice trembled in spite of himself. He knew before he was answered.

"The Galilean!" the courier shouted, all pretense at control now gone. "The town is full of the word. The women have seen him. His disciples have seen him. The tomb is empty. *He is risen!*"

Without a word Pilate turned and staggered to his room. His brain kept telling him there must be some mistake, but in his heart he knew it was true. The young man was alive! Truth does not die! He had stood face to face with truth and had not known it!

It was hours afterward when Claudia came upon him, staring out into the night. His face was drawn and white. His lips moved falteringly, but no words issued from them. He seemed oblivious to all the world about him. He was as a man who has read the writing of his own doom.

The sound of Claudia's step upon the stone seemed to penetrate to his benumbed brain, and he turned upon her as a man would turn in his grave. "Have you heard?" the woman asked, scarcely speaking.

Pilate only nodded. He stared at Claudia as if she might have been a visitor from another planet. For seconds—seconds that seemed eter-

nities—they stood thus. At last he spoke, and his words fell, clattering like hail upon the cobblestones. "He is risen. He is truth! *I crucified God!*" ⁴

POEM:

We doubted our God in secret,
We scoffed in the market-place,
We held our hearts from His keeping,
We held our eyes from His face;
We looked to the ways of our fathers,
Denying where they denied,
And we said as He passed, "He is stilled at last,
And a man is crucified."

But now I give you certain news
To bid a world rejoice:
Ye may crush Truth to silence,
Ye may cry above His voice,
Ye may close your ears before Him,
Lest ye tremble at the word,
But late or soon, by night or noon,
The living Truth is heard.

We buried our God in darkness,
In secret and all affright;
We crept on a path of silence,
Fearful things in the night;
We buried our God in terror,
After the fashion of men;
As we said each one, "The deed is done,
And the grave is closed again."

But now I give you certain news
To spread by land and sea;
Ye may scourge Truth naked,
Ye may nail Him to the tree,
Ye may roll the stone above Him,
And seal it priestly-wise,
But against the morn, unmaimed, new-born,
The living Truth shall rise! ⁵

—THEODOSIA GARRISON

LEADER:

Truth does not die! It cannot be confined to any grave. Of course Christ arose! The grave could not hold him, for he is truth. He conquered sin and death then, and he will continue to conquer through all the ages of eternity. We serve an ever-living, ever-victorious Christ! Truth and righteousness may for the moment be hidden from view. But they will rise again! Through the power of Jesus Christ right will ultimately triumph; truth will always endure.

HYMN (triumphantly): "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name."

BENEDICTION:

Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. AMEN.⁶

8

It Works at Home Too

(*Christian Family Week or Mother's Day*)

PRELUDE: "Living for Jesus."

CALL TO WORSHIP:

O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.¹

HYMN: "I Would Be True."

LEADER:

Young people today are interested in the thing that works. They want to see results—concrete results. Perhaps they are too impatient to see the results of their efforts. It is reassuring to young people to know that Christianity works—works effectively—and produces real and tangible results! *It works at home too!* That is the important thought we are considering at this time. The modern home is desperately in need of something that will produce revitalizing, transforming results. Christianity will do that very thing, if we give it an earnest, honest trial in the home. And young people are the very ones to make their Christian faith work effectively at home.

How Christianity works in the home will be demonstrated for us now by means of a skit of three scenes. There are four characters in the skit: Mr. and Mrs. Barnett and their two children, Bob, a junior in college, and Betty, a senior in high school. You will notice that the two young people take a major part in making Christianity work in their home in a new and vital way.

SCENE I:

(BOB is studying at a table. BETTY is lounging in a big chair, a book in her lap.)

BETTY: (*Thoughtfully*) Bob, do you think our home is really a Christian home?

BOB: (*Surprised*) What do you mean, Betty?

BETTY: Oh, just that we had a lesson in Sunday school recently about making Christianity work at home, and I have been wondering if we are making it work in ours. We aren't even very good pals in our family. I used to think you and I were real chums, but since you've been going to the university we don't see much of each other. Mother and Dad are busy with their activities in the church and other organizations, and we hardly ever do anything together as a family.

BOB: It's funny, but I have been thinking about our family, too. I've been pretty critical of Mother and Dad lately. They're always asking where I'm going in the evenings and insisting that I get home at a "respectable hour," as they call it. I've been thinking that perhaps we don't talk things over with them or try to understand them as we should. I expect they are carrying a heavier load right now than we realize. I'm afraid we aren't helping them very much with the problem of making Dad's salary meet all our expenses.

BETTY: I think you're right, Bob. And I'm sure we're not making Christianity work in our home as we should. Mother and Dad are active church members. You and I both work in the youth department at church. What can we do, Bob, to make our home more truly Christian?

BOB: Why don't we ask Mother and Dad if we can have a family council and spend a whole evening just talking things over?

BETTY: That's a swell idea! I know they'll go for it in a big way, too! (*Exeunt BETTY and BOB.*)

LEADER:

The outcome of this conversation between Bob and Betty was significant in the life of the Barnett family. Family council night became an important event in the life of the family—one which all four members of the family kept faithfully marked in their date books each month.

We will have the privilege of listening in on one of the family council meetings—one in which the Barnetts tackle the very problem which Betty and Bob discussed in the conversation that started the ball rolling: "Making Christianity Work at Home."

SCENE II:

(*The family is seated informally about a table.*)

MR. BARNETT: Bob, I'll bet you never realized you were starting a real family tradition when you suggested a monthly family council.

BOB: I thought it was a good idea, of course, but frankly, I didn't dream it could mean as much to our family as it has.

MRS. BARNETT: Our discussion last month about family finances has enabled me to feel much more confident about the future. Your father and I greatly appreciate the way in which you and Betty are helping us use our income to the greatest possible advantage.

BETTY: Remember that Bob is helping to earn the income, too, by working each Saturday at his new job. Even I helped a little this last month. I saw the most adorable dress at the Style Shop, with purse and shoes to match, and I didn't even say one word about it, much less insist that you buy it for me, as I probably would have done a few months ago!

MR. BARNETT: You're doing all right, Betty. That shows a real family spirit! For our family council this evening Bob suggested that we talk over the problem which you originally mentioned to him, Betty—making Christianity work at home. All of us are interested in this problem, but I'm afraid we haven't taken time to think much about it through the years. Let's think of as many suggestions as possible for making our home more Christian. Betty, you be our secretary for this evening and keep a list of all the suggestions that are made. (BETTY secures pencil and paper.)

MRS. BARNETT: This may sound rather vague, but I feel that a Christian home must be a place of *understanding* and *helpfulness*. All members of the family must constantly try to understand each other and be helpful and unselfish at all times. I think that we have always had these ideals in the back of our minds, but I feel that during the past few months they have become more evident in our family relationships. The family council nights have helped, and I am so grateful for the new spirit that is developing in our family.

BOB: I know we understand each other more than ever before. We understand now the problems you and Dad have had regarding finances. We can also see more clearly how you feel about our being out extra late at night and other problems. That reminds me of another characteristic of a Christian home—a *spirit of co-operation*, or the sharing

of problems in the home and the sharing of work and responsibilities, too.

BETTY: I've been thinking of that too, and I think I should confess that I haven't been helping Mother with the work as I should. I've been excusing myself by imagining that my school and social activities were all-important, and too often I dash away without giving a thought to helping with the dishes or other work.

MR. BARNETT: Well, we hardly expected this to become a confession meeting, but it would probably be good for us. I think Bob and I too have failed to take a very active part in the work that needs to be done at home. We might give Mother a night off each week and the three of us plan the menu, cook the meal, and wash the dishes.

BOB: I think it's a good idea—if Mother would trust us in the kitchen and be willing to eat whatever we concoct! Let's try it tomorrow evening!

MRS. BARNETT: This is so sudden! But it sounds like a grand idea to me too!

BETTY: Here's another thought. If we are to have a Christian home, we must develop a real *spirit of comradeship* among all members of the family. I know we are improving, but I think we still need to do more things together as a family. I think that at least once a month we should plan something for just the four of us—a picnic or hike, a swim, a game of tennis, or attending a concert. I don't see why we can't sit together in the church services, too—at least part of the time.

BOB: Sounds like another good idea. Speaking of doing things together, why can't we make some fudge or popcorn balls tonight when we have finished this discussion?

MR. BARNETT: Fudge or popcorn balls! Why not make both? But before we get to that, here's another thought for Betty to add to her list. Before our home can be truly Christian, we'll have to *worship God together in our home*. When could we find a time for daily family worship?

MRS. BARNETT: That's a real problem, and I've been thinking about it, too. It seems to me that the only time we can all be together regularly is after breakfast each morning. That would mean getting up half an hour earlier each day. Are we willing to do that? (*The group is thoughtful for a few moments.*)

BETTY: It would be pretty hard at first. All of you know how I hate to

get up in the morning. But I know it would be worth it and that it would mean ever so much to our family. Let's try it in the morning.

MR. BARNETT: We will want good devotional materials for our family worship period, and that thought suggests another requirement of a real Christian home—*Christian literature for the home*. I talked to Pastor Davis about it recently, and he gave me a list of Christian books and magazines for our home. I have already sent in subscriptions for two of the magazines. The books, which we can gradually purchase, include devotional books, biographies of great Christians, a Bible dictionary, a Bible commentary, and a concordance.

BOB: These books and magazines will also strengthen our faith as individual Christians. Christianity can't work very well in the home unless *each individual member of the family is an earnest follower of Christ* and is constantly striving to grow as a Christian.

MRS. BARNETT: (*Earnestly*) That is very well stated, Bob. After all, that is really the basic requirement for a Christian home; all the other requirements we have mentioned are dependent on it. Each one of us should give more time to personal prayer, meditation, and Bible study, and to the all-important task of serving Christ and following him more closely in our everyday lives. Betty, read us the list you have been making and be sure to include the important point which Bob has just made.

BETTY: (*Reads the following list along with any other suggestions which have been made by the young people participating in the skit.*)

1. A Christian home is a place of understanding and helpfulness.
2. A Christian home has a spirit of co-operation.
3. A Christian home has a real spirit of comradeship.
4. In a Christian home the members of the family worship God together every day.
5. A Christian home provides Christian literature for all members of the family.
6. In a Christian home each individual member of the family is an earnest follower of Christ.

MR. BARNETT: I think that gives us something to strive toward as a family. Keep the list, Betty, and we'll refer to it in the future to refresh these thoughts in our minds. For the present, how about singing a few old, familiar hymns around the piano—and then to the kitchen for fudge and popcorn balls! (*Exeunt MR. and MRS. BARNETT, BETTY, and BOB.*)

LEADER:

You can readily see that the Barnett family are well on the road toward making Christianity work at home, and that they are having a lot of fun doing it, too! One of the fine results of this particular family council night was the beginning of regular family worship in the Barnett home. It will be our privilege to share one of their daily worship periods. Let's enter into the spirit of worship and make their devotional service a real worship experience for each one of us.

SCENE III:

(The family is seated informally in living-room chairs.)

MR. BARNETT: Our devotional thought for today is entitled "A Faith for Our Day." The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews tells us that faith is a conviction or assurance of things not seen. A vital faith has implicit trust in an unseen God of love and in spiritual values that are unseen, yet eternal.

The story is told of a man plodding along one morning through an exceedingly dense fog. He came upon a young lad gazing upward and holding his hands in front of him as if he were grasping something.

"What are you doing out here all alone in the fog?" inquired the man.

"I'm flying a kite, sir," the boy replied.

The man pretended astonishment. "A kite!" he said. "There is no kite up there. I can see nothing but fog."

"But there is a kite, sir," protested the boy. "I know there is."

"How do you know it, lad? You can't see a thing up there. You can't hear a sound."

"But, sir," came the reply, "I can feel it pull. You take hold of this string, and you can feel it pull too."

Just so, when we take hold, by faith, of the God who is revealed to us in Christ, we can feel the pull of the unseen God upon our lives. Although we cannot see him with our eyes, we can feel his presence and power in our lives. We can know beyond a shadow of a doubt that he is there, guiding and directing our lives and the destiny of the universe.

Such a faith is desperately needed for our day. Thick fogs of sin, selfishness, and uncertainty surround us. Only a strong unwavering faith in Christ, who revealed to us the power and providence of God,

is sufficient for our day. Only such a faith on the part of individual followers of Christ can save our homes and all the institutions and ideals which we hold dear.

MRS. BARNETT: The first part of our scripture lesson is taken from Heb. 11:1-10. (*She reads the scripture passage.*)

BETTY: (*Reads as a poem stanza 1 of "My Faith Looks Up to Thee."*)

BOB: The second part of our Scripture is from Heb. 11:32-40. (*Reads scripture passage.*)

BETTY: (*Reads as a poem stanzas 1 and 2 of "Faith of Our Fathers."*)
(*Circle of Prayer: BETTY, BOB, and MRS. BARNETT may each give a brief prayer, with Mr. BARNETT giving the following prayer as the conclusion of the family worship service.*)

MR. BARNETT: Our Father, we thank thee for the meaning and purpose which thou dost give to our lives as individuals and as a family. We are thankful that we can come to thee as a family and find strength and guidance for our lives. Help us to have a faith in thee that is sufficient to meet the doubts and fears and temptations of our day, and may we share the faith we have in thee with others. Enable us to make our home truly Christian and to be an encouragement to others to build Christian homes. In the name of Christ we pray. Amen.²

LEADER:

(The four young people taking part in the skit may stand quietly with the leader.) May all of us sing prayerfully the first stanza of "My Faith Looks Up to Thee."

CLOSING PRAYER (by leader):

Dear God, enable us, as young people, to catch a vision of what it means to be true followers of Jesus Christ. May we have a strong, unwavering faith in thee, and may we put that faith to work in our homes. Help us to do some definite and constructive thing this week to make our homes more Christian. In Jesus' name we pray. AMEN.

9

A Pentecost for Our Day

(*Pentecost Sunday*)

PRELUDE: "Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart."

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Fill me with life anew,
That I may love what thou dost love,
And do what thou wouldst do.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Till I am wholly thine,
Until this earthly part of me
Glows with thy fire divine.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
So shall I never die,
But live with thee the perfect life
Of thine eternity.

—EDWIN HATCH

PRAYER:

O God, we pray that thy Holy Spirit may dwell within us and empower us to live radiantly and to serve thee wholeheartedly. Help us to rely more on the strength of thy Spirit and less on ourselves. May we be conscious of the presence of the Holy Spirit in our midst during this time of worship. AMEN.

HYMN: "Holy Spirit, Truth Divine."

SCRIPTURE:

And when the day of Pentecost was now come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they

were sitting. And there appeared unto them tongues parting asunder, like as of fire; and it sat upon each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Now there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound was heard, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speaking in his own language. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying, Behold, are not all these that speak Galileans? And how hear we, every man in our own language wherein we were born? . . . And they were all amazed, and were perplexed, saying one to another, What meaneth this? . . . But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and spake forth unto them, saying, Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and give ear unto my words. . . . Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves know; him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay. . . . This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses. Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear. . . . Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified.

Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do? And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. . . . They then that received his word were baptized: and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls.¹

LEADER:

Pentecost Sunday has been called the birthday of the Christian Church. It occurs fifty days after Easter. It was on this day that the Holy Spirit came into the hearts of the 120 followers of Christ who were gathered in an upper room in Jerusalem. The coming of the Holy Spirit into the lives of these early Christian believers was a never-to-be-forgotten experience. From that day on they had the conviction that their Lord was not dead but alive and present with them. Great

changes took place in their own lives and in the life of the church, following Pentecost. Fear gave way to boldness; faith replaced doubt; impotence gave way to power.

For too long our churches have thought of Easter as being the climax of the yearly program of the church. Many churches do not plan an aggressive program of activities after Easter; they "let down" and experience the post-Easter slump. What a tragedy! The Easter experience should be the beginning of a great spiritual effort in every church, climaxed on Pentecost Sunday.

The vision fades, the power soon is lost
If Easter does not lead to Pentecost.²

Two stories will be presented, emphasizing the tremendous significance of Pentecost. The first will be the amazing story of the first Pentecost, based on the scripture passages which have been read. The second will be the story of a typical church of our own day, and how that church has a new experience of Pentecost.

STORY:

THE FIRST PENTECOST

COME IN, come in," Peter said to the group of disciples at the door. "We have much need to talk together, and even greater need to pray."

A number of disciples, both men and women, had gathered in an upper room in Jerusalem. Jesus had just ascended to his Father. Before leaving he had uttered some amazing and challenging statements: "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations. . . . Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. . . . Ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

No wonder the disciples, these tremendous assignments still ringing in their ears, felt the need of coming together for discussion and prayer. All personal differences were forgotten in their eagerness to serve the Master. They all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication.

This significant prayer meeting prepared the way for the history-making event that followed a few days later. On this later occasion more than one hundred disciples assembled together in a spirit of love and oneness in Christ. Suddenly there came a sound like that of a mighty

rushing wind, and at that moment they received the gift of the Holy Spirit, which Christ had promised before his departure.

This sound of a mighty wind, which accompanied the coming of the Spirit, was heard throughout Jerusalem and served as a trumpet call to bring the people of Jerusalem together. They discovered a group of radiant disciples, to whom God had given power, through his Holy Spirit, to witness effectively to the people of many nations who were dwelling in Jerusalem. God empowered the disciples to speak in the native tongues of the diverse people who gathered to hear them. Parthians, Medes, Elamites, Egyptians, Arabians, and many others heard in their native languages the mighty works of God! Of course they were amazed! And they said one to another, "What is the meaning of this? Are not all of these men Galileans?"

The speaking in diverse tongues prepared the way for the important act of witnessing. The people of the city had gathered together in large numbers from the shops, the schools, the market places. Their curiosity had been aroused. The stage was set for a mighty presentation of the gospel. It was Simon Peter whom the Spirit directed to be the chief spokesman. He eloquently poured forth the story of Christ and his death and resurrection. Peter, who not many days past had denied his Lord because of a few remarks by a servant girl, was now bold and unfeeling. "Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly," he warned, "that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified."

After hearing Peter's powerful sermon, the multitudes were strangely stirred. They said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" And Peter said unto them, "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ . . . ; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Then they that responded to this challenge were baptized, and there were added to the church that day about three thousand souls!

LEADER :

What an epochal day this was for the church of Jesus Christ! The church, energized by the Holy Spirit, now had the power to stir entire communities to their very depths and to bring great hosts of people to repentance and belief in Christ. The Day of Pentecost was a mighty illustration of the power of the Holy Spirit, the power which became available on that day to the church.

What can Pentecost mean to the church today? We will now hear the story of a church of our own day.

STORY:

A PENTECOST FOR OUR DAY

SPENCER REED, a promising young minister of spiritual depth and earnestness, was the pastor of the Hartsville Community Church. There were several smaller churches in town, but the Community Church was the church to which the "best people" belonged. The members of the church were quite satisfied with the status of their church in the community. Fortunately, the pastor did not share their feeling of smug satisfaction.

"Margaret," he said to his attractive young wife one Monday morning, "I've never been so discouraged in all my life."

"What is it now, Spencer?" she asked, knowing that her husband was never satisfied with himself or his efforts.

Spencer, somewhat irritated by his wife's nonchalance, exclaimed, "I'm afraid even you do not understand my concern for the people of our church. They are self-satisfied and have little interest in other people. They do not pray earnestly for the church and for others. They are critical and unforgiving of one another. I have failed in the task God has assigned to me."

"No, Spencer," Margaret interrupted. "You have a deep concern for the spiritual welfare of these people. You pray earnestly for them. You preach with deep conviction Sunday after Sunday. God does not hold you responsible for their indifference."

"But, Margaret," Spencer added earnestly, "I do so want to share what little I have with them. What can I do to open their eyes and their hearts?"

"Talk to Jim Fielding," Margaret suggested. "There is one member of our church who is vitally interested in the cause of Christ."

"You are right, Margaret," Spencer agreed, "but we have failed as far as Elizabeth Fielding is concerned. She does not share Jim's interest in Christian work."

To which Margaret replied: "I have the faith to believe that the day will come when she will join with Jim in the work of Christ."

Spencer Reed took his wife's advice and had a heart-to-heart talk with Jim Fielding about the spiritual indifference of the members of Community Church. Jim was a young man of unusual ability and

already held a very responsible position in the company for which he worked.

"I think you're right, Pastor," Jim said. "I have felt the same concern myself. In fact, I planned to talk to you about it, because I think I've found the answer to the problem!"

"The answer!" Spencer Reed exclaimed. "You're just the man I'm looking for!"

"Well, perhaps that's being overoptimistic," Jim Fielding admitted, "but while traveling for my company I've discovered several churches that have started discipleship groups among their members—small groups which meet in homes and which provide opportunity for real Christian fellowship and for prayer."

"It sounds like a great idea," the pastor agreed, "but do the members of our church feel the need of coming together for Christian fellowship and prayer?"

"We're not as self-satisfied as we often seem, Pastor," Jim replied. "Underneath we are hungry for something beyond ourselves that really satisfies. I have the faith to believe that our people will respond to these discipleship groups."

"I admire your faith, Jim. It's like that of my wife," Spencer said, remembering Margaret's similar statement regarding Elizabeth Fielding. "With God's help, we'll try it!"

Spencer Reed and Jim Fielding planned two discipleship groups immediately—small groups primarily for the leaders and officers of the church. After the first few meetings of the groups Jim Fielding dropped into the pastor's study for a chat. He was scarcely inside the door when Pastor Reed began enthusiastically: "I've never seen anything like the response to these discipleship groups, Jim. That was an inspired moment when you suggested that we try them. There has been a real spirit of prayer in these groups for the first time in my ministry here. Grievances are fast disappearing among the leaders of our church, and a real spirit of Christian comradeship is developing. Do you know that the young people have formed a discipleship group of their own?"

"That's great," Jim said, as soon as he could get in a word. "There's another thing for which I'm thankful. One of the groups met in our home, and do you know, Pastor, I think Elizabeth was very much impressed by the spirit of prayer and Christian fellowship which was evident in the group."

"I have prayed, as you have, Jim, that this might be so," the pastor said.

As the months passed, additional discipleship groups were formed until most of the active members of the church were participating in the groups. The results were amazing. Attendance at the worship services of the church increased almost 50 per cent. Attendance at the youth fellowship on Sunday evening more than doubled, and a new spirit of earnestness and enthusiasm was noticeable among the young people. Two outstanding members of the youth fellowship dedicated their lives to full-time Christian service.

It was one year after the organization of the first discipleship group when Spencer Reed suggested that the time had come for a systematic visitation of homes in the community for the definite purpose of reaching men, women, and youth for Christ and the church. This was a new venture for Community Church, but forty of the best-qualified members of the church attended Pastor Reed's instruction session and went out two-by-two to carry to the homes of Hartsville the message of Jesus Christ. They found it difficult to speak to their fellow citizens about the need of becoming followers of Christ and members of the church. But by the end of the week all forty of the callers agreed that they had never done anything in their lives so worth while as this.

The following Sunday morning Spencer Reed preached with power and conviction. At the close of the sermon he gave an opportunity for those who had made decisions during the week to make a public declaration of their decision. To the amazement of the entire congregation, forty-five people promptly made their way to the front of the sanctuary. And one of the first of these was Elizabeth Fielding, Jim's beautiful young wife!

The following morning—and what a different Monday morning it was from the “blue” Monday a year before when Spencer Reed had confessed his failure to his wife—Jim Fielding knocked upon the parsonage door. His face was radiant, his step eager. The pastor welcomed him cordially.

“I thought you'd drop in, Jim,” he said. “I'm mighty happy about Elizabeth's decision. I know what it means to you—and to her. That was a great day for our church when you suggested that we try the discipleship groups.”

“It's something I can't understand,” Jim added. “I thought it was an idea worth trying, but, frankly, I never imagined that it could mean so much to all of us! What is the explanation, Pastor?”

To which Spencer Reed replied: “I have only one explanation, Jim. We have experienced a modern Pentecost in our church! We have the

Holy Spirit in our midst! We are not responsible for the results that have been obtained. The Spirit of God is using us as his agents to accomplish the miracles that have been wrought!"

DOXOLOGY (to be sung immediately by entire group):

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

CLOSING PRAYER:

We thank thee, O God, that thy Spirit is available to guide and empower us whenever we earnestly desire to be used by thee. In these moments of quiet prayer may we hear thy voice and dedicate all that we are and have to thee. We pray that thy church around the world may be worthy of a new Pentecost, a Pentecost for our day and generation.

May the love of God the Father, the fellowship of Christ our Saviour, and the presence and power of the Holy Spirit be with each one of us now and through all the days ahead. AMEN.

Our Nation Under God

(Independence Day)

SUGGESTIONS TO THE LEADER:

The following "radio program" will be effective if the leader remembers that the details of a radio program must be planned with painstaking care. One realistic arrangement is to have the "broadcast" given behind a screen or curtain with only a radio in front of the audience, as if the young people were listening to the program through the radio. Another effective setup is to use a public-address system and have the young people listen to the program through a loud speaker—the "broadcast" being presented in an adjoining room. Other groups may prefer to arrange the room like a radio studio with the audience watching the actual presentation of the program. In this case, a "mike" will be needed, either an improvised "mike" or one that is borrowed from a local radio station.

Whatever form of presentation is used, be sure that all participants have rehearsed their parts thoroughly so they will be able to read the parts effectively. It is also important that the music be well prepared and that it "comes on the air" immediately at the appointed places. In other words, a radio program should move along like clockwork! The names of the church, the town, and of the "radio station" should be changed to correspond to the local situation.

PRELUDE: One stanza of "My Country, 'Tis of Thee."

ANNOUNCER:

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. This is Station GWCC, with headquarters in the Greenwood Community Church, Greenwood, Ohio. We are about to present the Fellowship Hour, a youth program brought to you each Sunday evening at this same hour by the Youth Fellowship of the Greenwood Community Church. Tonight's program is entitled "Our Nation Under God." It vividly portrays the needs, hopes, and as-

pirations of the people of America. It reveals that every citizen has a vital part to play in making our land a nation that is truly led of God. In just a moment you will hear "Our Nation Under God," another dramatic presentation of the Fellowship Hour.

TRUMPET OR PIANO: One stanza of "God of Our Fathers, Whose Almighty Hand."

SPIRIT OF AMERICA:

I am the composite dreams and aspirations of multiplied millions. The Pilgrim fathers endowed me with great daring and strong conviction. An untamed wilderness instilled in me sturdy endurance and courageous endeavor. The ever-increasing tide of immigrants brought to me the hopes and ambitions, the energies and abilities of millions of diversified peoples. The blending of all this human potentiality has, by a strange alchemy, produced within me a dynamic drive of activity and energy, a throbbing surge of devotion to country and love of freedom. I am the world's one great example of the fusing of many tongues, tribes, and nationalities. I am the Spirit of America!

TRUMPET OR PIANO (full volume): Refrain of "O Beautiful for Spacious Skies."

YOUTH OF AMERICA:

O Spirit of America, I give thanks to God for the glorious heritage which you have bequeathed to me, a youth of this great land. I am challenged by the lofty principles upon which our nation was founded, by the high visions which have led our people onward through the years. But what of the present and the future? In the past we have been a nation under God. Are we still following his guidance and his goals?

SPIRIT OF AMERICA:

Yours is a worthy question, O Youth. America should think seriously of the present and the future. We must continue to be a nation under God if we would write a glorious history for our country during the centuries that lie ahead. Let us call upon representatives of the various streams of our national life and discover their hopes for our nation in the days ahead.

TRUMPET OR PIANO: Last eight measures of "God of Our Fathers."

WORKMAN:

I represent the millions of laborers of America. As a Christian workman I am proud of my native land, and I have great hopes for the America of the future. The work that a man does with his hands should be held in high regard by all Americans—by the laborers themselves and also by the men who employ labor. I am proud of the skills that are mine and of the work these skills enable me to do. America has been a nation of hard-working people: people who were not ashamed to toil with their hands, who took pride in a day's work well done. The America of the future must, under God, be a nation of honest, efficient, creative workers, workers who are respected by all, and who in turn have respect for the other groups that go to make up the miracle of America!

QUARTET OR DUET: "O Beautiful for Spacious Skies" (first stanza, full volume, rapid tempo).

EMPLOYER:

I represent the employers of America, and I too have lofty visions of our nation under the leadership of God. As employers we must have a greater appreciation of the contribution of American labor. We must give the workers a more creative part to play in the planning and improving of American industry. We must show a genuine interest in the workman, even as we expect him to show a real interest in his work. In short, both workers and employers must place human values above material values. Is such a goal possible in the realm of industry? I believe that it is, but only when Americans take seriously the gospel of Jesus Christ.

QUARTET OR DUET: Second stanza of "O Beautiful for Spacious Skies."

MEMBER OF A MINORITY GROUP:

I represent the minority groups of our land: the American Indian, the American Negro, the Chinese and Japanese Americans, the American Italians, and other racial groups. We are all Americans, first and forever. This is our native land, or else we have chosen this land to be our own above all others. We too look beyond the discouragements and heartaches that sometimes beset us to the day when justice and understanding shall be realities in the life of our nation. We are grateful for the progress that has been made in providing justice for all the diversi-

fied peoples of America, and we pray God's guidance in the further realization of this lofty ideal.

QUARTET OR DUET: Third stanza of "O Beautiful for Spacious Skies."

STATESMAN:

I am proud to be a servant of my country, and I try to be worthy of my position of trust and responsibility. The youth of our land should realize that true statesmanship is a noble calling, one which requires vision, charity, courage, and a high devotion to God. I have a vision of America first—not merely in things material, but in things of the spirit; not merely in the assertion of right, but in the assumption of duties. America first! Not flaunting her strength like a giant, but bending in helpfulness over a sick and wounded world like a good Samaritan! I have a vision of America blazing a new trail of courageous co-operation to that new world of justice and understanding wherein wars shall be no more!

QUARTET OR DUET: Fourth stanza of "O Beautiful for Spacious Skies."

YOUTH OF AMERICA:

These visions which we have heard are high and exalted. I too, representing the Christian youth of America, cherish the same lofty aspirations for our land. Only through a far greater allegiance to Jesus Christ can we hope to attain them. Only his standards will suffice. Only power from him will enable us to realize our goals. Many of our citizens do not know the power of the Christian gospel. We must bring them too under the banner of Jesus Christ!

SPIRIT OF AMERICA:

You are right, O Youth. Our nation can be led of God only if our citizens turn to God for guidance and forgiveness, and dedicate their lives to his plans and purposes. This is made exceedingly plain in God's Holy Word. Hear, O people of America, the clarion call of God.

READER:

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.
Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord.

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for their's is the kingdom of heaven.¹

QUARTET OR DUET (with trumpet accompaniment): Second stanza of
"God of Our Fathers."

PRAYER (by YOUTH OF AMERICA):

O God of our fathers, as young people of America we dedicate ourselves anew to the faith of our fathers. We have caught a new vision of our country as it might be if we followed thy leadership. We pray that the leaders of our nation may look to thee for guidance and wisdom, and that the citizens of our land may turn from their sinful ways and seek thy forgiveness. Increase our faith, our vision, and our loyalty to thy principles of justice, mercy, purity, and peace. We renew our allegiance to Jesus Christ and seek his guidance in fulfilling thy will and purpose for our beloved land. AMEN.

QUARTET OR DUET (with trumpet accompaniment): First stanza of
"Faith of Our Fathers."

ANNOUNCER:

You have been listening to the Fellowship Hour, presented each Sunday evening at this same time by the Youth Fellowship of the Greenwood Community Church. Tonight's program was entitled "Our Nation Under God." Those taking part included (list names of participants). The music in tonight's broadcast was provided by (list names of musicians).

You are invited to join us next week at this same hour for another

presentation of the Fellowship Hour. This is ———, your announcer, wishing for each one of you a new vision of "Our Nation Under God"!

TRUMPET OR PIANO: One stanza of "My Country, 'Tis of Thee." (Begin playing softly at the beginning of the announcer's concluding paragraph; increase volume as he concludes.)

I I

The Tie That Binds

(World-wide Communion Sunday)

PRELUDE: "Blest Be the Tie That Binds."

CALL TO WORSHIP:

In Christ there is no East or West,
In Him no South or North;
But one great fellowship of love
Throughout the whole wide earth.

In Him shall true hearts everywhere
Their high communion find;
His service is the golden cord
Close binding all mankind.

—JOHN OXENHAM

PRAYER:

Dear God, we thank thee for the golden cord that binds us with Christians of all nations. On this World Communion Sunday may all misunderstanding and prejudice be wiped from our minds as we rejoice in the fellowship which we may have with thee and with others through Jesus Christ. May we radiate our love for the Master in our relationships with our fellow men. In his name and spirit we pray.
AMEN.

HYMN: "In Christ There Is No East or West."

LEADER:

Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love:
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.

—JOHN FAWCETT

In this world of suspicion, prejudice, and strife the only tie that has the power to bind all mankind together is the tie that is based on a common love of and devotion to Jesus Christ. This far-reaching cord of love spans oceans and rivers; it surmounts the barriers of race, class, culture and nationality.

The most significant symbol of this world-wide fellowship in Christ is the communion service or Lord's Supper. This memorial supper, which was instituted by Christ himself shortly before his death, brings us into fellowship with all the followers of Christ through the centuries—the disciples, the leaders of the early church, the writers of Christian literature, the martyrs, the great reformers, the missionaries. It also brings us into fellowship with present-day disciples of every color, race, and nation. The communion service is the most enduring and widespread religious observance the world has ever known.

It is of great importance that once each year we observe World Communion Sunday to remind us anew of the imperishable tie that binds all believers together in Christian love and fellowship. On this significant day Christians throughout the world gather about the Lord's table as an expression of the unity which all believers have in Christ.

The World Communion Day observance begins each year in New Zealand. When it is ten o'clock Sunday morning in New Zealand, it is five o'clock on the Saturday afternoon before in New York. Beginning at that time there is a group of Christians observing communion in some part of the world every hour for twenty-four hours. Think of it! A vast throng of people of every race and nationality, celebrating the Lord's Supper in dozens of languages! This sacred table is 25,000 miles long, for it encompasses the globe! What a privilege to be a part of the one great unifying force in the world today!

On World Communion Sunday we should be particularly aware of the great events in the life of our Lord which Christians throughout the world cherish and share in common. Let us recall these beloved scenes in Scripture and in song.

READER:

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, (because he was of the house and lineage of David:;) to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her first born son, and wrapped him in swad-

dling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

HYMN (by entire group): "Joy to the World."

READER:

And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him. And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.

HYMN (by entire group): "Jesus Calls Us."

READER:

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

SOLO: "Break Thou the Bread of Life."

READER:

Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

SOLO: "'Tis Midnight; and on Olive's Brow."

READER:

And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary,

there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left. Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots. And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God. And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar, and saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself. And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

SOLO: "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross."

READER:

In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you. And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.

HYMN (by entire group): "Christ the Lord Is Risen Today."

READER:

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.¹

SOLO: "O Zion, Haste," or "Jesus Shall Reign."

LEADER:

These great incidents from the life of our Lord should have unusual significance for us on World Communion Sunday. It is appropriate for us on this day to review the main episodes in the life of Christ and to rethink our basic Christian beliefs, those cardinal truths which we hold in common with all earnest followers of Christ around the world.

TALK:

BELIEFS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

HAVE YOU ever heard this statement: "It doesn't matter what a person believes as long as he is sincere"? That remark doesn't face the facts. What we believe vitally influences our actions, attitudes, and outlook on life. In short, our beliefs largely determine what we are and what we do with life. It does make a difference what we believe.

1. It makes a difference what we believe about God. Jesus taught us to pray "Our Father which art in heaven." We should think of God as our heavenly Father, who loves us with an infinite love and who seeks to lead us into paths of truth and righteousness. If we do not follow his leading and obey his laws, we bring harm to ourselves and others, because God is a God of law and justice, and he holds us responsible for our thoughts, words, and deeds.

2. It makes a difference what we believe about sin. Do young people today realize the seriousness of sin? Do they realize that little sins, unless checked, invariably become larger sins and bring about the breakdown of character and personality? Sin separates us from God and makes it impossible for us to grow in Christian character and usefulness.

3. It makes a difference what we believe about Jesus Christ. When Christ was on earth, he forgave sins, he taught with authority, he performed miracles, and he made claims which could be made only by one who was truly God. Christ was God in human form. He came to show us what God is like and to bridge the gap which sin had caused between man and God. "No man cometh unto the Father," he said, "but by me." Christ suffered the final result of man's sin, which was death, in order that we might be forgiven and be released from the power of sin. "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Every communion service is a reminder of Christ's sacrifice on the cross for us. Faith in that sacrifice—the body that was broken and the blood that was shed—is surely the very essence of the tie that binds us with other Christians around the world on this World Communion Sunday.

4. It makes a difference what we believe about the Holy Spirit, the Bible, prayer, and the church.

If we believe that the Holy Spirit is God present with us in the world today, that he is seeking to guide us into the fullness of life which is in Christ Jesus—then we will surely yield our lives to his leadership and guidance.

If we believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, that it has the power to transform individuals and communities in our day, as in every day—then we will study it eagerly and earnestly.

If we really believe that prayer is conversation with the Eternal, that through prayer God can release to our lives the power and peace which we so desperately need—we will give prayer a vital place in our lives.

If we believe that the church is the instrument through which the Spirit of God moves among men and by which men are brought into a knowledge of God, that it is the greatest agency of righteousness the world has ever known—then we will cherish the church and give generously of our time, strength, and possessions that the church may be strengthened and its ministry increased.

AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (may be read by a young person, or copies may be provided so that the entire group may read it together):

We believe in the one God, Maker and Ruler of all things, Father of all men, the source of all goodness and beauty, all truth and love.

We believe in Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, our teacher, example, and redeemer, the Saviour of the world.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, God present with us for guidance, for comfort, and for strength.

We believe in the forgiveness of sins, in the life of love and prayer, and in grace equal to every need.

We believe in the Word of God contained in the Old and New Testaments as the sufficient rule both of faith and of practice.

We believe in the Church as the fellowship for worship and for service of all who are united to the living Lord.

We believe in the Kingdom of God as the divine rule in human society, and in the brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God.

We believe in the final triumph of righteousness, and in the life everlasting. AMEN.²

LEADER:

Our faith in these mighty truths is a vital part of the tie that unites us with other Christians throughout the earth. On World Communion Sunday we are particularly thankful for our faith and for the fellowship which we have with all who are followers of the Master. Jesus emphasized the importance of this fellowship among Christian believers. "A new commandment I give unto you," he said, "That ye love one another; as I have loved you. . . . By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." How blessed is the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love!

HYMN: "Blest Be the Tie that Binds."

CLOSING PRAYER:

Dear God, our heavenly Father, we are grateful on this World Communion Day for the faith and love that unite us with Christians of all lands. May our oneness and unity in Christ be demonstrated by our lives as we work and pray and serve with Christians of all races and denominations. May our love for thee glow more brightly, and may it bind us closer to thee and to each other through all the days ahead. AMEN.

They Conquer Without Arms

(World Order Sunday or Armistice Day)

PRELUDE: "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling."

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Lead us, O Father, in the paths of peace;
Without thy guiding hand we go astray,
And doubts appall, and sorrows still increase;
Lead us thro' Christ, the true and living Way.

.
Lead us, O Father, in the paths of right:
Blindly we stumble when we walk alone,
Involved in shadows of a moral night;
Only with thee we journey safely on.

—WILLIAM H. BURLEIGH

PRAYER:

O God of all nations and peoples, forgive us for not following thy will and thy way. Forgive us for the selfishness and hatred in our own hearts and minds. We thank thee for the vision that we have of a better way—thy way of love and unselfish good will. Transform our thoughts and attitudes according to thy will, and give us the courage to radiate thy spirit of love and peace in all our daily contacts. In the name of Christ, the Prince of Peace. AMEN.

HYMN: "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling."

SCRIPTURE:

The words of Micah, the prophet of peace of the Old Testament:

"And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off;

and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

The words of Jesus, the Prince of Peace of the New Testament:

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away. Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you."¹

POEM:

O God, whose will is life and peace
For all the sons of men,
Let not our human hates release
The sword's dread power again.
Forgive our narrowness of mind;
Destroy false pride, we plead:
Deliver us and all mankind
From selfishness and greed.

O God, whose ways shall lead to peace,
Enlighten us, we pray;
Dispel our darkness and increase
The light along our way.
Illumine those who lead the lands
That they may make at length
The laws of right to guide the hands
That wield the nations' strength.

O God, who callest us to peace,
We join with everyone
Who does his part that wars may cease
And justice may be done.

Enable us to take the way
 The Prince of Peace hath trod:
 Create the will to build each day
 The family of God.²

—ROLLAND W. SCHLOERB

SOLO OR DUET: "A Hymn of Peace" (tune: "All Saints" C. M. D.).

The Son of God goes forth for Peace,
 Our Father's love to show;
 From war and woe He brings release,
 O, who with Him will go?
 He strikes the fetters from the slave,
 Man's mind and heart makes free;
 And sends His messengers to save
 O'er every land and sea!

The Son of God goes forth for Peace,
 Nor lands nor pow'r to gain;
 He seeks to serve, to love, to lift—
 Who follows in His train?
 A glorious band, in every age,
 In spite of scorn and pain,
 True sons of God, His peace have made;
 Who follows in their train?

Now let the world to Peace be won,
 And every hatred slain;
 Let force and greed be overcome
 And love supreme remain!
 Let justice rule in all the earth,
 And mercy while we live,
 Lest we—forgiven much—forget
 Our brother to forgive!

We send our love to every land—
 True neighbors would we be;
 And pray God's Peace to reign in them,
 Where'er their homeland be!
 O God, to us may grace be given,
 Who bear the dear Christ's name,

To live at peace with every man,
And thus our Christ acclaim! ³

—ERNEST BOURNER ALLEN

LEADER:

Men through the centuries have used many methods of forcing their will upon their fellow human beings. They have resorted to slavery, serfdom, warfare, threats, and intimidation. Very few have consistently tried the method which Jesus advocated for bringing about changes in the world. Jesus would have us conquer the world with a dynamic ideal: overcoming evil with good, hatred with love! He would have us conquer—without arms!

"Blessed are the meek," Jesus said, "for they shall inherit the earth." The mighty meek! How they have been underestimated and misunderstood! They are the ones who will ultimately conquer the earth—not with arms, but with the force of an ideal.

The Jews of Thessalonica complained that Paul and Silas had turned the world upside down. Exactly! The Roman Empire with its lavish wealth, its military might, its haughty pride, could not withstand the impact of that group of first-century disciples who, though small in numbers, were completely possessed by the Christian message of love. They conquered without arms!

Others through the centuries have dared to follow Christ's method. Courageous heralds of the Cross have carried the message of love to distant places, overcoming fear, superstition, idol worship, paganism. A soldier who was stationed in Africa during the last war wrote to his father that he had been entertained royally in the home of a missionary and that this missionary had more power and influence in that part of Africa than the government had. The young man wrote that he had a new respect for the power of missions in international life. No matter where our servicemen were sent—to Africa, China, Burma, India, or the islands of the Pacific—they found that the missionaries had been there for a hundred years or more, transforming individual lives and entire communities by preaching and proclaiming the gospel of love. Yes, they conquer without arms!

STORY:

THE INVINCIBLE LEADER

"TELL ME a story about when you were a great soldier. Tell me about one of the battles you won," said a little boy to his grandfather.

The old man had been a colonel in the Austrian army for many

years and could recount fierce tales of conquest by his troops. But today he shook his head as he took the boy upon his knee.

"I will tell you, instead," he said, "of the greatest battle I ever lost, which was won by braver men than mine."

The little boy was astonished, for he thought that his grandfather's soldiers were the bravest in the world. So he listened eagerly.

"I was commanded," the old colonel began, "to march against a little town in the Tyrol and lay siege to it. We had been meeting stubborn resistance in that part of the country, but we felt sure that we should win because all the advantages were on our side. My confidence, however, was shaken by a remark from a prisoner we had taken. 'You will never take that town,' he said, 'for they have an Invincible Leader.'

"What does the fellow mean?' I inquired of one of my staff. 'And who is this leader of whom he speaks?'

"Nobody seemed able to answer my question, and so, in case there should be some truth in the report, I doubled preparation. As we descended through the pass in the Alps, I saw with surprise that the cattle were still grazing in the valley and that women and children—yes, and even men—were working in the fields. 'Either they are not expecting us, or this is a trap to catch us,' I thought to myself.

"As we drew nearer the town, we passed people on the road. They smiled and greeted us with a friendly word, and then went on their way. So friendly was their attitude toward us, and so different from the usual reception given us, that my soldiers forgot they were under discipline and returned the greeting.

"Finally we reached the town and clattered up the cobble-paved streets—colors flying, horns sounding a challenge, arms in readiness. The forge of the blacksmith shop was glowing, and the smith left it to stand in the door with a number of others to watch us pass. Suddenly he waved to one of my soldiers, and I heard him exclaim, 'I knew that fellow when we were boys together at Innsbruck!'

"Women came to the windows and doorways with little babies in their arms. Some of them looked startled and held the babies closer, then went quietly on with their household tasks without panic or confusion. As for the boys—little fellows like you, my son [the old man cuddled the boy in his arms], they made us feel as though we were taking part in a glorious parade for their special amusement. They swarmed after us, whooping with delight and asking in-

numerable questions about the weapons we carried. Apparently they had never seen guns and swords before.

"It was impossible to keep strict discipline, and I began to feel rather foolish. My soldiers answered the questions of the children, and I saw one old warrior throw a kiss to a little golden-haired tot on a doorstep. 'Just the size of my Liza,' he muttered.

"Still no sign of an ambush. We rode straight to the open square on which the town hall faced. Here, if anywhere, resistance was to be expected. This is what we found. The door of the beautiful old building was wide open. Pigeons flew up from the grass around the fountain as we approached. No cannon or barricade was in sight, and my regiment, as it poured into the square, looked strangely out of place.

"Just as I had reached the hall and my guard was drawn up at attention, an old white-haired man, whom by his insignia I surmised to be the mayor, stepped forth, followed by ten men in simple peasant costume. They were all dignified and unabashed by the armed force before them—the most terrible soldiers of the great army of Austria."

"And what did this old man say, in the face of your guns and your cannon?" asked the little boy breathlessly.

"He walked down the steps, straight to my horse's side, and with hand extended, cried, 'Welcome, brother!' One of my aides made a gesture as if to strike him down with his sword, but I saw by the face of the old mayor that this was no trick on his part.

"Where are your soldiers?" I demanded.

"Soldiers? Why, don't you know we have none?" he replied.

"But we have come to take the town."

"Well, no one will stop you."

"Are there none here to fight?"

"At this question the old man's face lit up with a rare smile that I will always remember. Often afterwards, when engaged in bloody warfare, I would suddenly see that man's smile, and somehow I came to hate my business. His words were simply: 'No, there is no one here to fight. We have chosen Christ for our Leader, and he taught men another way.'"

"What did you do then, Grandfather?" asked the little boy eagerly.

"Do you know, son," the old soldier answered, "there seemed nothing left for us to do but to ride away, leaving the town unmolested. It was impossible to take it. If I had ordered my soldiers to fire on those smiling men, women, and children, I knew they would not have obeyed

me. Even military discipline has its limits. Could I command the grizzled soldier to shoot down the child that reminded him of his Liza? I reported to headquarters that the town had offered unassailable resistance, although this admission injured my military reputation. But I was right. We had literally been conquered by these simple folk who followed implicitly the leadership of Jesus Christ." ⁴

LEADER:

They conquered without arms! Love and good will are, ultimately, the mightiest forces in the universe. Jesus said, "Resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. . . . And whosoever shall compel thee to go one mile, go with him twain."

The gospel of the "second mile" is not impractical idealism. It works! It works because it is in harmony with the spiritual laws of God's universe. Failure to understand and apply these laws has brought the world to the brink of chaos and disaster. The principle of altruistic good will works in the lives of young people and adults. It smooths out the difficult human relationships that arise in the home, the church, the school, the community. It even works in the complex problems of industry and business, as a few courageous men of good will have discovered. It will also work in the relieving of tension, fears, and mistrust among nations when you and I and millions of other humble people around the world dare to trust the leadership of Jesus Christ. Man's ways have miserably failed. Why not try God's way of love, good will, and peace?

PRAYER:

Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
 Forgive our foolish ways;
 Reclothe us in our rightful mind,
 In purer lives thy service find,
 In deeper reverence, praise.

.
 Drop thy still dews of quietness,
 Till all our strivings cease;
 Take from our souls the strain and stress,
 And let our ordered lives confess
 The beauty of thy peace.

RESPONSE (sung softly as solo or duet):

Breathe through the heats of our desire
Thy coolness and thy balm;
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
Speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,
O still small voice of calm! Amen.

—JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

BENEDICTION:

May the peace of God that passes all understanding abide with us and with increasing numbers of men, women, and youth around the world. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

13

Let Us Give Thanks

(*Thanksgiving*)

PRELUDE: Beethoven's "Hymn to Joy."

CALL TO WORSHIP:

O Father, thou who givest all
The bounty of thy perfect love,
We thank thee that upon us fall
Such tender blessings from above.

We thank thee for the grace of home,
For mother's love and father's care:
For friends and teachers—all who come
Our joys and hopes and fears to share.

For eyes to see and ears to hear,
For hands to serve and arms to lift,
For shoulders broad and strong to bear,
For feet to run on errands swift.

For faith to conquer doubt and fear,
For love to answer every call,
For strength to do, and will to dare,
We thank thee, O thou Lord of all.¹

—JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING:

O God, help us to think of thee during this period of praise rather than of ourselves. May we think of thy power and majesty, of thy greatness and glory, of thy love and mercy. May our hearts be filled to overflowing with gratitude because thou art our God and because thou hast revealed thyself to us through thy Son, Jesus Christ. Teach us to love thee as we ought to love. AMEN.

RESPONSIVE READING:

Leader: It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord,

Group: And to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High.

Leader: O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

Group: Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.

Leader: For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

Group: In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also.

Leader: The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land.

Group: O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker.

Leader: Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.

Group: Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

Leader: Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Group: Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

Leader: For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.²

INTRODUCTION BY LEADER:

According to an old legend, two angels came down from heaven. One was the Angel of Petition, the other the Angel of Praise. Each carried a basket, and they went about the earth to gather up men's prayers. Very soon the Angel of Petition had filled his basket. The Angel of Praise wandered far and wide through all the earth, finding only a few who praised God and gave thanks for all his mercies. He found one who gave thanks for the privilege of being alive. There was one who was thankful for the beauty of the earth; another who thanked God for strength with which to work. A youth gave thanks for the visions which were his of a life of service and adventure, and a child, looking up with clear eyes, said, "Thank you, God, just for being you."

In the evening of that day the two angels passed through the gates of heaven and came into the presence of the Lord. The Angel of Petition poured out the great heap which he had gathered, and said, "These are

the petitions for gifts and blessings which the men of earth desire." Then the Angel of Praise began to take out one by one the few prayers which he had gathered. As he did so, he gazed upon them with great amazement. The prayers of praise had become rare flowers of celestial beauty, whose fragrance filled all the courts of heaven! And the Lord said: "Not only have these prayers of thanksgiving filled the courts of heaven with their fragrance, but they have brought beauty and blessing to the lives of those faithful few who uttered them and to all whom their lives shall bless."

What a beautiful and soul-refreshing thing it is to sing or speak our praises unto God! We will have an opportunity to do both as we consider some of the great hymns of thanksgiving.

READER:

Come, ye thankful people, come,
Raise the song of harvest home.

What hymn could be more appropriate for a period of praise than this old favorite of the Thanksgiving season? This great hymn of the harvesttime was written in 1844 by Henry Alford, who was one of the greatest ministers the Church of England has ever had. During all these years this hymn has called men and women together to extend their praise and thanksgiving to God. Let us make this hymn our own expression of praise to God.

HYMN: "Come, Ye Thankful People, Come."

READER:

When we sing hymns of praise, we should always remember that God is the object of our praise and adoration. This is well expressed in a hymn of praise by Henry van Dyke:

Joyful, joyful we adore Thee,
God of glory, Lord of love;
Hearts unfold like flowers before Thee,
Praising Thee their sun above.³

In 1908 Van Dyke, the poet-preacher of our own land, visited Williams College, which is located in the beautiful Berkshire Hills of western Massachusetts. He made his visit memorable by writing a new hymn of joy

and gladness. He gave it to the president of the college at the breakfast table with these words, "Here is a new hymn for you; your mountains were my inspiration. It must be sung to Beethoven's 'Hymn to Joy.'"

These lovely words have been sung to the music of Beethoven ever since and have been an inspiration to countless people. They are real poetry with beauty in every line. They are especially appropriate at the Thanksgiving season and suggest the joy with which we should offer our praise and adoration to God.

SOLO: "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee."

READER:

"For the Beauty of the Earth," another favorite Thanksgiving hymn, also reminds us of the recipient of our praise, for each stanza ends with the refrain:

Lord of all, to thee we raise
This our hymn of grateful praise.

This hymn was written, not by a clergyman, but by a teacher, Folliott S. Pierpoint, who was born in England in 1835. We should note the many different reasons for gratitude expressed in this hymn. Although we have only half of the original poem in our hymnbooks, we can count at least fifteen things to be grateful for. Note also the wide variety of things mentioned, beginning with the beauties of nature, the joy of human love, and closing with thanksgiving for the church. As we sing this hymn, let us think of the Giver of every good and perfect gift, the one to whom we are offering our gratitude and praise.

HYMN: "For the Beauty of the Earth."

READER:

Still another reason for gratitude and thanksgiving is suggested in the hymn "God of Our Fathers." The author, Daniel C. Roberts, is thankful for the guidance and leading God has given to our beloved land. The birthplace of this hymn is a little Vermont town hidden away among the Green Mountains. The name of the town is Brandon, and the occasion was a Fourth of July celebration in 1876 honoring the centennial of the founding of our nation. For this important occasion Daniel Roberts, rector of the Episcopal Church, was asked to write a hymn. "God of Our Fathers" is that hymn. It combines gratitude for the past

with earnest prayer for the present and the future. How needed in our day is the prayer in the second stanza:

Be thou our Ruler, Guardian, Guide, and Stay,
Thy Word our law, thy paths our chosen way.

Let us sing this hymn with real thanksgiving for our land and with earnest prayer that our nation may be worthy of God's continued blessing in the days ahead.

HYMN: "God of Our Fathers."

READER:

We must go back over three hundred years for our next Thanksgiving hymn. "Now Thank We All Our God" was written in 1636 during the Thirty Years' War in Germany. Through all those difficult years Martin Rinkart was pastor of the Lutheran Church in Eilenburg. Since this was a walled city, it was constantly overcrowded with refugees from the surrounding villages. The result was famine and pestilence. At one time Rinkart was the only clergyman in the city, and he is said to have read the burial service for over four thousand people in a single year. Yet in the midst of such experiences he was able to write a hymn of thanksgiving that has stood the test of centuries.

SOLO OR DUET: "Now Thank We All Our God."

READER:

A beautiful hymn of praise which emphasizes God's greatest gift to man comes to us out of the wealth of German hymnody. The hymn is "Fairest Lord Jesus," and the author remains unknown to this day. Its earliest known appearance was in a collection of folk songs in 1677. How it came to be there no one has yet discovered. Whoever wrote it or whatever its source, it is one of our great legacies from the past. It praises Christ so joyously and sincerely it is no wonder that it is a favorite hymn in every generation. Let us sing this hymn as our own expression of love for and devotion to Jesus Christ.

HYMN: "Fairest Lord Jesus."

READER:

There is another Thanksgiving hymn which in its entirety is an expression of gratitude. There is no asking in the entire hymn. Think of the prayers we offer: How many times is there one of pure thankfulness,

with no petition? The hymn is "My God, I Thank Thee" by Adelaide A. Proctor, who is well known as the composer of "The Lost Chord." Miss Proctor was frail in body and died when only thirty-nine, but her life was a blessing to many and a lesson to those of us who have stronger bodies but who lack the beautiful spirit of thanksgiving which, as this hymn shows, characterized her life.

SOLO: "My God, I Thank Thee."

READER:

After the long list of blessings which these Thanksgiving hymns have suggested—God's bounteous provision, the wonders of nature, the love of friends and home, the liberty of our beloved land, the glory of the Church, and, above all, the Lord Jesus Christ, God's greatest gift to man—we certainly have ample reason for rejoicing. That is what our final Thanksgiving hymn exhorts us to do:

Rejoice, ye pure in heart,
Rejoice, give thanks, and sing.

This hymn was written in 1865 by Edward H. Plumptre for a great processional in Peterborough Cathedral in England. As the choir of many voices marched down the aisle of this huge cathedral, the rhythmic gladness of this hymn was caught up by the great congregation and all joined in a genuine tribute of united praise to God. Surely we too have caught the spirit of Thanksgiving and can enter wholeheartedly into this hymn of joyous praise.⁴

HYMN: "Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart."

LITANY OF PRAISE:

Leader: For the bountiful harvesttime, which reminds us, not only of thy gracious provision for our physical needs, but also of thy bounteous love which surrounds us throughout our lives,

Group: We praise and thank thee, O God.

Leader: For all the wonders of the universe, which speak to us of thy majesty and power,

Group: We praise and thank thee, O God.

Leader: For love within the family circle, for fellowship with friends, and for soul-refreshing communion with thee,

Group: We praise and thank thee, O God.

Leader: For a rich heritage of Christian principles and ideals and for the freedom of thought and speech, of conscience and worship, which our nation provides and protects,

Group: We praise and thank thee, O God.

Leader: For thy Church with its divine message and mission and, above all, for thy Son, who has brought life and light to mankind,

Group: We praise and thank thee, O God.

LEADER:

There's something amazing about the giving of thanks. It becomes a way of life; thanksgiving becomes "thanksgiving." The more we give thanks, the more we have to be thankful for, and the more we inspire others to be grateful. We start a chain reaction which reaches on and on like the ever-widening ripples on a lake. Let us start this mysterious cycle of thanksgiving in our lives by having a period of silent prayer in which we definitely and joyously express thanks to God for our individual joys and blessings.

PERIOD OF SILENCE:

CLOSING PRAYER:

Dear God, we are overflowing with thanksgiving for the joy of living, the challenge of high endeavor, and the inspiration of noble purposes. May this uplifting surge of gratitude to thee become a way of life for each one of us. May it be the beginning of a continual attitude of thankfulness which will bring purpose and power to our lives, and blessing and benefit to the lives of others. In the name of Christ, for whom we give our most earnest thanks. AMEN.

14

The Bible Makes a Difference

(Universal Bible Sunday)

PRELUDE: "Break Thou the Bread of Life."

CALL TO WORSHIP:

O Word of God incarnate,
O Wisdom from on high,
O Truth unchanged, unchanging,
O Light of our dark sky,
We praise thee for the radiance
That from the hallowed page,
A lantern to our footsteps,
Shines on from age to age.

—WILLIAM W. HOW

PRAYER:

We thank thee, O God, for the guidance and inspiration which thy Word has brought to mankind. We thank thee for the Saviour, whom thy Word proclaims. Help us to have a greater love for the Bible and for the Christ, who is the central theme of thy Word. In his name we pray. AMEN.

LEADER:

Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. Blessed art thou, O Lord: teach me thy statutes.

RESPONSE (to be sung by entire group):

Break thou the bread of life,
Dear Lord, to me,
As thou didst break the loaves
Beside the sea;
Beyond the sacred page
I seek thee, Lord;

My spirit pants for thee,
O living Word!

LEADER:

I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways. I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word.

RESPONSE:

Bless thou the truth, dear Lord,
To me—to me,
As thou didst bless the bread
By Galilee;
Then shall all bondage cease,
All fetters fall;
And I shall find my peace,
My All-in-All.

LEADER:

Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end. Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart.

RESPONSE:

Thou art the bread of life,
O Lord, to me,
Thy holy Word the truth
That saveth me;
Give me to eat and live
With thee above;
Teach me to love thy truth,
For thou art love.

LEADER:

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. . . . Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.¹

RESPONSE:

O send thy Spirit, Lord,
Now unto me,
That he may touch my eyes,
And make me see:
Show me the truth concealed
Within thy Word,

And in thy Book revealed
I see the Lord.

—MARY A. LATHBURY

LEADER:

The Bible makes a difference. It has played a vital role in the rise and fall of nations. It has altered the course of history. It has transformed individuals, families, and communities.

England has had the Bible for over 1,300 years. It was in 597 that Pope Gregory sent forty monks with six Latin Bibles to the rough, unlettered inhabitants of Britain. Less than three hundred years later Alfred the Great rebuilt the English code of laws, fashioning them squarely upon the Bible, thus giving birth to the idea that to be a statesman one must be a servant of the people. The laws, customs, beliefs, and language of the English people have exerted a tremendous influence around the globe. Queen Victoria once said that the secret of England's greatness is the Bible.

America's greatest heritage is likewise the Bible. The signers of the Mayflower Compact knew very little except the Bible. They were men of one Book. The statutes drawn up by them and by the pioneers who followed after them pillared the foundation of our country solidly on the Word of God. And what a difference this has made in the development of the laws and customs and ideals of our nation!

From England and America have gone forth other pioneers, carrying the Bible with its transforming power to hundreds of distant tribes and nations. William Carey went to India in 1793 and in his thirty-nine years of missionary work made or edited thirty-six translations of the Bible into the various dialects of India. These translations of the Bible have helped to mold the ideals of India's leaders and played a vital role in the surging desire for freedom which won for India her independence.

Robert Morrison went to China in 1807, mastered one of the most difficult languages, and within fifteen years issued the Bible in Chinese, the language spoken by one fourth of the people of the world! Adoniram Judson arrived in Burma in 1812 and after years of harrowing persecution made the Bible available in the Burmese languages. Today Burma has many strong Christian churches and communities, entire tribes, such as the Karen and Kachin tribes, having been won to Jesus Christ.

The people of Madagascar, second largest island in the world, have

had the Bible in their native tongue since 1835, due to the heroic efforts of missionaries of the London Missionary Society. Today there are more than three thousand Protestant churches in Madagascar, and the laws and customs of the entire island have been profoundly altered by the influence of the Word of God. The Bible makes a difference!

SOLO: First stanza of "Thy Word Is Like a Garden, Lord" (tune: Seraph).

Thy Word is like a garden, Lord,
With flowers bright and fair;
And everyone who seeks may pluck
A lovely cluster there.
Thy Word is like a deep, deep mine;
And jewels rich and rare
Are hidden in its mighty depths
For every searcher there.

STORY:

SHOSEI KINA TENDS THE LAMP

HUNDREDS of soldiers, sailors, and marines of World War II discovered that the Bible makes a difference in the remote villages and scattered islands to which it has been taken.

One dramatic evidence of the vitality of the Word of God was found in the village of Shimmabuke, not far from the place where the original American landings were made in Okinawa.

This little community of 150 Christians had sprung from a few converts made thirty years before by a Methodist missionary passing through the islands on his way to Japan. The missionary's labors had not been extensive, just the casual doings of a man "preaching the gospel as he went." Since his brief stay at the remote village those few days thirty years before, the community had neither seen another missionary nor had any contact with other Christians. All they had to guide them into Christian development and maturity was a Japanese Bible which the missionary left behind.

But apparently that was enough—that plus the imparted zeal for spreading the gospel which was the heritage the missionary left to his two or three converts. One of these converts was Shosei Kina, who later became the head of the village schools and who through the years had been using that single copy of the Bible to teach Christianity to the pupils in his schools.

When the Japanese came to Okinawa to fortify it against possible invasion, they frowned upon Shosei Kina's zeal and insisted that he keep his Christianity to himself. When he refused to do so, they replaced him. But he carried on his missionary labors just the same and, with his brother Mojon and their families, held the little band of Christians together. Several evenings a week the whole community would assemble to hear Shosei Kina read from the original Bible the missionary had left thirty years before. It was pretty well worn by this time, but its message was still as bright as ever, even brighter because of the darkness of war about them.

Then came the Americans, storming across the center of the island. And when they swept up to Shimmabuke, among the first Okinawans to greet them were Shosei Kina and his brother Mojon. It wasn't of the war they wished to ask, nor was it to protest the screaming shells and the bursting bombs that had left part of the village in smoking ruins.

All Shosei Kina and his brother knew was that these were Americans, and though these soldiers approached things a trifle differently from the manner of the missionary thirty years before, nevertheless they were Americans—and therefore Christians! Shosei Kina and his brother Mojon wanted to find someone who could do two things: give them a picture of Jesus and help them understand a few perplexing problems they had come across in the Word of God.

The startled GI's who first heard this request through an interpreter muttered something about being "fresh out of pictures of Jesus" and indicated that they were pretty much in a hurry and unable to pause for Bible discussion. However, one of them said, "Let's send for the chaplain."

Chaplain Roy N. Hillyer, Tenth Army senior chaplain, got the message, and in no time at all he was in the village and meeting this strange band of Christians who had grown and developed without benefit of anything more than a Bible and a few dimly remembered words of a Methodist missionary. He dug from his pack a copy of Sallman's "Head of Christ," to the vast delight of Shosei Kina and Mojon. The chaplain found the group amazingly intelligent, serious, and dignified in the conduct of their worship and in "living like Jesus" among their neighbors. Chaplain Hillyer took his choir to the village, and a great time was had by all.

Because of the damage caused by the war the village was abandoned, and another was built by army engineers. Shosei Kina has been restored

to his superintendency of schools, and his brother Mojon is now the accepted headman of the village. Thus a new day dawns for Shimma-buke.

And there are more Bibles coming. Chaplain Hillyer has approached the American Bible Society for enough copies to supply each member of this stanch little Christian community. And when these come, it is the intention of Shosei Kina and Mojon to create a special shrine for the original Bible which the Methodist missionary left—and above the cherished Bible will be displayed the long-desired picture of Jesus which was dug from Chaplain Hillyer's duffle bag.²

SOLO: Second stanza of "Thy Word Is Like a Garden, Lord."

Thy Word is like a starry host:
A thousand rays of light
Are seen to guide the traveler,
And make his pathway bright.
Thy Word is like an armory,
Where soldiers may repair,
And find, for life's long battleday,
All needful weapons there.

LEADER:

The Bible makes a difference. Whenever it is read earnestly and followed faithfully, it transforms lives and communities. The Bible can be a source of guidance, inspiration, and power for youth today, provided youth gives the Word of God a place of prominence in its planning, thinking, and living. The Bible can make a difference in your life and mine!

STATEMENT OF FAITH IN THE BIBLE (may be read by a young person, or copies may be prepared so that it may be read in unison by the entire group):

1. I believe in the Bible because it has outlived all other books. It has increased in influence and power for almost two thousand years. It is in greater demand today than ever before.

2. I believe in the Bible because it is the world's best seller. It has been translated into more than a thousand different languages. It is not the book of the month or the book of the year; it is the book of the centuries.

3. I believe in the Bible because it has had a remarkable influence upon all the countries into which it has gone. It has transformed laws, governments, customs, standards, and beliefs.

4. I believe in the Bible because it has brought untold blessing to the lives of people who have read it earnestly. It has helped them to know God through his Son, Jesus Christ. The Bible has inspired men to be honest, pure, courageous, and unselfish. It has helped people in time of temptation, sorrow, sickness, and death.

5. I plan to read the Bible faithfully and earnestly, and thus enable the book of the centuries to "make a difference" in my own life.

SOLO: Third stanza of "Thy Word Is Like a Garden, Lord."

O may I love thy precious Word,
May I explore the mine,
May I its fragrant flowers glean,
May light upon me shine.
O may I find my armor there,
Thy Word my trusty sword;
I'll learn to fight with every foe
The Battle of the Lord.

—EDWIN HODDER

CLOSING PRAYER:

Increase our understanding and appreciation of thy Word, O God. Help us to give the Bible an important place in our lives by reading it more regularly and earnestly, and by following its teachings more consistently. Speak to us as we read thy Word, and may we discover thy will and thy way for our lives. In the name of Christ, who gives to the Bible its supreme significance. AMEN.

15

The Lights of Christmas

(*Christmas*)

PRELUDE: A medley of Christmas carols.

CALL TO WORSHIP:

'Tis not enough that Christ was born
Beneath the star that shone,
And earth was set that holy morn
Within a golden zone.
He must be born within the heart
Before he finds his throne,
And brings the day of love and good,
The reign of Christlike brotherhood.¹

—MARY T. LATHROP

INVOCATION:

O God, the radiant glow of the Christmas season has cast its rays about us. Help us to feel our need of renewed spiritual glow in our innermost lives. At this Christmas time may we receive from thee new light and radiance which shall abide with us throughout the days ahead. In the name of Christ, the great Light of life. AMEN.

HYMN: "Silent Night" (entire group may sing the first stanza without using hymnbooks and then hum the carol softly).

LEADER:

More than any other season of the year, Christmas is a time of light. In a very unique way lights remind us of the meaning and spirit of Christmas. What are the lights of Christmas, and what is their meaning for us at Christmas and throughout the year? (Room lights dim.)

READER I:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things

came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing that exists came into being. In Him was Life, and that Life was the Light of men. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overpowered it.²

READER II:

The world was in great darkness at the time of Christ's birth—the darkness of slavery, immorality, and greed. The coming of the Christ Child was as the coming of a great light. (Lights a tall candle in the center of table.) John's Gospel says of Christ: "The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overpowered it."

Jesus himself declared: "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." He also said: "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness." This large candle, then, represents Christ, whose coming to the earth as the great Light of the world we celebrate at Christmas time.

SOLO: Stanzas 1 and 4 of "O Little Town of Bethlehem."

READER I:

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.³

READER II:

When the angel appeared unto the shepherds that first Christmas night, the glory of the Lord shone round about them. Thus the birth of Christ was heralded with a great display of heavenly light and the proclamation of "good tidings of great joy." Certainly Christmas, more than any other season of the year, kindles the light of joy. But if this joy is to last throughout the year, it must come directly from the light of Christ. (Lights candle from light representing Christ and places it in holder to left of central candle.) This gleaming candle represents the light of joy—the "good tidings of great joy" which the angel proclaimed. It is the joy which floods our souls when we accept the good news of the gospel.

Too many of us have lost the radiant glow of true Christian discipleship. Although we profess to be followers of Christ, our lives do not have the zest and radiance which should characterize every follower of the Master. One of the lights which this Christmas season should rekindle within us is the glow of Christian joy and enthusiasm.

HYMN: "Joy to the World" (sung joyously by entire group).

READER I:

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.⁴

READER II:

The radiant light which shone upon the shepherds on the hillsides of Bethlehem accompanied not only the announcement of good tidings of great joy; it accompanied also the celestial song of the heavenly host, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Another light of Christmas, which is also kindled from the great Light of the world, is the light of peace. (Lights candle from candle representing Christ and places it in holder to the right of central candle.) It seems that there is very little of this light glowing in the world today. And yet the true light of peace, that inner peace of mind and soul, is available to every one of us. Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

Thousands have experienced the peace and poise and purpose that come from Christ. When enough people throughout the earth experience this inner peace, then will come the day of world peace for which all of us long. The apostle Paul said, "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

SOLO: Stanzas 1 and 4 of "It Came upon the Midnight Clear."

READER I:

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. . . . When they

had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.⁵

READER II:

When we think of the lights of Christmas, we always remember the great star in the heavens which led the Wise Men to the newborn king. That star was a light of faith. It was faith that brought the Wise Men from the lands of the East. It was faith that enabled them to see the star and that caused them to fall down before the Christ Child and present to him their costly gifts.

✓ It is only by faith that men have ever been able to come to Christ and truly worship him. It is by faith that we must come to the Master today and kneel before him, presenting to him our costliest gifts—our strength, our talents, our lives, our all. (Lights candle from light representing Christ and places it in holder to left of central candle.) The Christian message is essentially a message of faith—faith in a Person, the one whose birthday we celebrate at Christmas. May this light of faith gleam more brightly in our lives at this holy season and throughout the days and years ahead.

SOLO: "As with Gladness Men of Old."

READER I:

Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.⁶

READER II:

As followers of the Master we have the task of reflecting the light of Christ so that those about us will be drawn unto him. The message of Christmas would not be complete without this imperative of sharing the light which we have from Christ and which gives joy and peace and purpose to our lives. (Lights candle from light representing Christ and places it in holder to right of central candle.) We may call this candle

the light of love, for only sharing which is done in the spirit of love is acceptable to Christ and effective in his Kingdom. We must have enough Christlike love and good will in our hearts to share the gospel message with the person next to us and with men of all races to the ends of the earth.

This light of love must of necessity come from Christ himself. We get our message from him; any other message is insufficient for men's needs. We also get our motive from him—the motive of Christian love. All other motives are utterly inadequate. The light of love should burn more brightly in our hearts and lives than ever before, and send us forth with a message of love to those about us.

POEM:

Candle light, burning bright,
Shine within our hearts tonight,
Fill us with a glow of love,
Like a Presence from above.
Shine through us in selfless deeds,
Shine in faith and noble creeds;
Light is what this dark world needs—
Christ the Lord has come! ⁷

—ALFRED GRANT WALTON

HYMN: "O Come, All Ye Faithful."

CLOSING PRAYER:

O thou great Light of the world, illumine our hearts and minds at this holy season of the year. Rekindle anew within us the light of joy, the light of peace, the light of faith, and the light of love. May these great Christmas lights glow brightly in our lives throughout each day of the new year. In the name of Christ our Redeemer. AMEN.

I 6

Seek Ye the King

(*Christmas*)

PRELUDE: "O Come, All Ye Faithful."

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.¹

PRAYER:

Help us, our Father, to seek Jesus as did the Wise Men of old. May we present to him our choicest gifts—our time, strength, possessions, and, above all, our love and devotion. May we at this Christmas season think not only of the Christ Child, but also of Christ the Man, our Saviour and King. In his name we pray. AMEN.

HYMN: "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing."

SCRIPTURE:

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.

And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Beth-

lehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.²

HYMN: "As with Gladness Men of Old."

LEADER:

Jesus, from the time of his nativity, has been drawing men, women, and youth unto himself. On the night of his birth shepherds, after seeing the angelic hosts above the hills of Bethlehem, came with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the Babe lying in a manger. Later there came the Wise Men from the East, saying, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him."

Men continued to seek the King during the years of his public ministry. Great multitudes listened to his teachings along the shores of the Sea of Galilee and on the hillsides. The sick, the blind, and the lame came to him in great numbers to be healed. Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, sought the counsel of Jesus, and the disciples left their homes and their vocations in order to follow and serve him. Even as Christ hung upon the cross, one of the thieves by his side sought his blessing and forgiveness.

We too should seek the guidance and forgiveness of the Master, especially at this Christmas season, remembering that those in our own day who are truly wise kneel before Christ in humility and gratitude, even as did the Wise Men of old.

POEM:

Wise men seeking Jesus
Traveled from afar,
Guided on their journey
By a beauteous star.

But if we desire Him,
He is close at hand;
For our native country
Is our Holy Land.

Prayerful souls may find Him
By our quiet lakes,
Meet Him on our hillsides
Where the morning breaks.
In our fertile cornfields,
While the sheaves are bound,
In our busy markets
Jesus may be found.

Every peaceful village
In our land might be,
Made by Jesus' presence
Like sweet Bethany.
He is more than near us,
If we love Him well;
For He seeketh ever
In our hearts to dwell.³

—JAMES EAST

STORY:

THE OTHER WISE MAN

IN THE days when Augustus Caesar was master of many kings and Herod reigned in Jerusalem, there lived in Persia a certain man named Artaban. A light shone one night through the curtained arches of Artaban's home, where the master of the house was holding council with a group of his friends. There were nine of them seated around a small black altar, where a tiny flame was burning. The men differed widely in age but were alike in the richness of their robes, which showed they belonged to the ancient order of the Magi, or Wise Men, searchers for truth.

Artaban told his friends that he had called them together to share a great secret with them. "For a long time," he said, "three other Magi and I have been studying the writings of the Hebrew prophets, who many years ago prophesied the coming of a Redeemer and King. We believe that the long-expected Messiah is soon to be born. The sign of

his coming will be a new star in the heavens, kindled from the union of two great stars.

"As soon as the star appears," Artaban continued, "I will leave to meet my three companions, who will wait ten days for me at Babylon. Together we will set out in search of the new King. I am sure the sign will come, so I have sold all my possessions and bought three jewels—a sapphire, a ruby, and a pearl—to carry as tributes to the King." And he showed them his three great jewels.

His friends were astonished—even dismayed—that Artaban should set out upon a search that seemed to them so vain and fruitless. But Artaban was determined. "The world without a great hope would be like yon altar without a living fire," he said. "The Light of the world will surely come. Will you not accompany me on my quest?"

But his friends departed in wonder and amazement, excusing themselves by saying that such a quest was not for them. Artaban's aged father alone lingered behind to encourage the young man; and after he had gone, Artaban was left in solitude. He gathered up the three great jewels—one as blue as a fragment of the night sky (the sapphire), one redder than a ray of sunrise (the ruby), and one as pure as the peak of a snow mountain at twilight (the pearl)—and replaced them in his tunic.

Then he lifted the heavy curtain and gazed out into the night. When the first signs of dawn were beginning to appear—even as Artaban watched—two great stars rolled together and blended into one; then a single new star sprang forth that grew in volume and beauty. Artaban bowed his head and said, "It is the sign. The King is born. I will go to worship him."

Day after day Artaban's swiftest horse sped through the forest of the Orontes Mountains. He knew he would have to ride hard and fast if he met his three companions at Babylon within ten days. He pressed on until within three hours' ride of his destination, when his horse suddenly slackened her pace. Within the shade of a pine grove she halted, quivering before the dark form of a man lying across the road. Artaban dismounted and found that the man was dying with a dreaded marshland fever. A conflict stirred within him. Should he lose out in the quest for the divine King to save a poor Hebrew peasant? If he delayed, his companions would surely leave without him; but if he ventured on, this man would surely die.

He stood for a moment intent, then quickly turned to the fever-stricken man. His decision had been made. Hour after hour he skill-

fully ministered to his needs. At last the sick man lifted his head. "Who are you that you should have saved my life?" he asked feebly.

"I am Artaban, one of the Magi. I am going to Jerusalem in search of the one who is born King of the Jews, the Prince and Deliverer of all men."

"Go not to Jerusalem," the Jewish peasant said, "for our prophets have told us that the King is to be born in Bethlehem. May the Lord bring you in safety to that place."

When Artaban reached Babylon, the three wise men had gone, and it was necessary for him to sell the sapphire, one of his precious gifts for the King, buy a train of camels, and set out toward Bethlehem alone.

After days of travel over desert wastes he reached Bethlehem, weary but full of hope, bearing his ruby and his pearl to offer to the King. He stopped at a low stone hut, where a mother was singing her baby to rest, and asked where he could find the Messiah. "His parents have fled with him to Egypt," the mother said, "for Herod, fearing the new King, has threatened to kill all the babies in the town."

Even as she spoke the noise of wild confusion and the clashing of swords came from without, and they heard the terrified cry: "The soldiers! The soldiers of Herod! Our children!" The young mother was terror-stricken.

Artaban went quickly and stood in the doorway of the house. His broad shoulders filled the portals, and the calmness of his face and the radiance of his eyes caused the soldiers to halt in their mad rush. "Here, take this," he said to the captain, and he parted with the glistening ruby in order that the soldiers would leave the house in peace.

Artaban was heavy of heart. The second gift was gone, and the King whom he was seeking had been taken to Egypt. But he continued his quest, searching throughout the land of Egypt for the Christ that he might present to him his one remaining gift. Though he did not find the Christ to worship, he found many to help, and the years passed swiftly as he fed the hungry, healed the sick, and comforted the sorrowing.

An old man now, Artaban decided to make one last visit to Jerusalem in search of the great King of kings. A deep gloom veiled the city, and many people were traveling toward the Damascus Gate. Artaban asked the reason for this and was told that Jesus of Nazareth, who was called King of the Jews, was to be crucified. Artaban caught his breath. Was the King to die? The King for whom he had spent his whole life searching!

Just then a troop of soldiers came down the street, dragging a debtor's young daughter into slavery. "Have mercy on me," she cried as she saw Artaban's kind face. Artaban trembled; the old conflict stirred within him, but only for a moment. Quickly he drew forth the pearl, his last gift for the King.

"This is thy ransom, daughter," he said, and the soldiers departed without her.

Even at that moment the earth trembled, buildings crashed to the street, and soldiers fled in terror. Artaban and the girl crouched beside a wall. The quest was over. He had not seen the King. He had failed in the one great goal of his life. The King was dead. Even at that moment he had been crucified.

But through the twilight a still small voice spoke to the old man. Artaban answered, "Not so, my Lord! When saw I thee hungry and fed thee? Or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw I thee a stranger and took thee in? Or naked, and clothed thee? When saw I thee sick or in prison, and came unto thee? I have never seen thy face, or ministered to thee."

Then the voice came again, faint and far away, yet very clear: "Verily, I say unto thee, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Artaban was radiantly happy. A perfect peace was his. His journey was ended. His treasures were accepted. The other wise man had found the King! *

DUET OR QUARTET: "Saviour, Thy Dying Love," or "O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go." (If desired, the pianist may play the hymn very softly during the last three paragraphs of the story.)

PRAYER:

We pray, our Father, that we may earnestly seek the King and discover him as our Saviour and Friend. We pray that as young people we may present our lives to his service and give a lifetime of unselfish, Christlike ministry to all who need our help. Grant that we may be more gentle and kind to little children, to the weak and helpless, to the aged and infirm. We pray for more of the compassion of Jesus, so that we may look upon the people about us with a greater understanding of their needs and problems, and with a more earnest desire to bring them to a knowledge of Christ. May we, by thy Spirit, manifest

a spirit of love and good will toward people of all races, toward those who dislike us, and toward those who are unkind and unlovely.

Keep us humble, our Father, by reminding us that the blessings and privileges which we enjoy have come to us, not because of our merit, but because of thy great love as it has been brought to us by Christian parents, the Christian Church, and other Christlike influences. Accept our heartfelt gratitude for all who had a part in bringing to us the peace and hope and joy of the gospel. In the name of Christ, who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. AMEN.

RESPONSE (as duet or quartet): Stanza 4 of "O Little Town of Bethlehem."

BENEDICTION:

May the Christ, who as a babe was placed in a manger and as a man was placed upon a cross on our behalf, abide in our hearts and lives, and make us a blessing to others. AMEN.

I 7

Christ's Call to Youth

(The Meaning of Christian Discipleship)

SUGGESTIONS TO THE LEADER:

You may desire to ask the pastor to lead the closing moments of decision and dedication. The pastor or youth sponsor should remain after the service to talk with young people who desire further guidance in the meaning of Christian discipleship.

PRELUDE: "Finlandia" by Sibelius.

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Youth, O Youth, can I reach you,
Can I speak and make you hear?
Can I open your eyes to see me?
Can my presence draw you near?

Is there a prophet among you,
One with a heart to know?
I will flash my secrets on him,
He shall watch my glory grow.

For I, the God, the Father,
The Quest, the Final Goal,
Still search for a prophet among you,
To speak my word in his soul.¹

—MARY S. EDGAR

HYMN: "Dear Lord and Father of Mankind."

PRAYER:

Dear Lord and Master of us all, may we hear thy still, small voice within our minds and souls during this hour of worship. Help us to

understand more fully the meaning of Christian discipleship and to give ourselves eagerly and unreservedly to thee. We pray not only for ourselves but for the youth of the world. May young people in ever-increasing numbers hear and heed thy call. AMEN.

LEADER:

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

RESPONSE: First stanza of "Jesus Calls Us."

LEADER:

No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

RESPONSE: Second stanza of "Jesus Calls Us."

LEADER:

Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

RESPONSE: Third stanza of "Jesus Calls Us."

LEADER:

And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him.²

RESPONSE: Fourth stanza of "Jesus Calls Us."

LEADER:

The call of Christ to youth has been echoing through the centuries ever since that first challenge went forth to the disciples of old. Millions

of young people have responded to his call and have found new faith, new joy, new purpose in life, new avenues of service and usefulness.

Christ is calling youth today as he has through the centuries that are past. What is the meaning of the discipleship to which he calls us? What is the call of Christ to youth? What does it involve?

TALK I:

A CALL TO REPENTANCE

CHRIST's call to youth is a call to repentance. All of us have sin in our lives. We have many thoughts that are impure and unworthy. We say and do many things that are thoughtless and selfish, damaging to others and to ourselves. We are guilty of shallowness and littleness, living narrow, ordinary lives when Christ calls us to a life of wide horizons, great vision, and high purpose. Each day we fail miserably to reach his expectations for us. All of us need a Saviour to save us from our littleness and our sin.

Christ would remind every young person of the seriousness of sin. Sin appears attractive and promises pleasure, when in reality it brings only heartache and regrets. As young people we are often tempted to commit little acts of impurity and dishonesty. They seem trivial and unimportant, and we fail to realize that every sin is serious, that every sin is black when compared to the pure, white radiance of God. We forget that so-called "little sins" lead to larger sins, and that even the smallest sin is damaging to personality and mars our influence and usefulness. Sin keeps us from being our best. It leaves a sense of guilt which disrupts our poise and peace of mind. Sin is life's greatest tragedy and life's greatest problem.

Christ is God's answer to the problem of sin. He came to seek and to save the lost, to bridge the gap which sin had caused between God and man. He gave his life on Calvary as a sacrifice for our sin. By faith in his sacrificial death for us we receive forgiveness for our sins, thus finding relief from the feeling of guilt and frustration which haunts our lives.

Dr. E. Stanley Jones tells about a minister who saw a very nervous youth on a train. He was so obviously distraught that the minister introduced himself and asked if he could be of help. The young man told the minister that he had quarreled with his father and had run away from home. But homesickness and remorse had overtaken him, and now he was returning home. He had written to his mother, "If it's all right for me to come, tie a white rag on a limb of the crab apple

tree down near the railroad tracks. I'll see it as the train goes by. If it's there, I'll get off at the station. If it isn't, I'll keep on going, I don't know where." To the minister the youth said, "We're almost there, and I'm afraid to look."

The minister told him to lean back and close his eyes. "I'll look for you," he promised. And in a few minutes the minister said, "You can look now! There's a white rag on every limb of that tree!"

Calvary is God's sign to every youth who has sinned that "it's all right to come home." We can come to God through Christ. We can find forgiveness, peace, and power through him.

SOLO: "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross."

TALK II:

A CALL TO OBEDIENCE

CHRIST also challenges youth to follow him as Master and Lord. His call is no small or trivial thing. It is a call to complete and exacting discipleship, to complete dedication of life to him. "No man can serve two masters," Jesus said. "Whosoever does not take up his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple. He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

As young people we are very much in need of just such a leader and guide. We have many perplexities and uncertainties. We have numerous questions about what is right and wrong. We need to repent of our sins and to make a fresh start, but we need far more than that. We need strength and guidance every day and every hour in all our activities and experiences. Only Christ can give us the inner power and resources to overcome temptation and to live a radiant, abundant life.

How do we receive this guidance and power from Christ? None of us deserves the abundant life which Christ brings; it cannot be earned. We receive it according to our faith. Faith is the great essential in Christian discipleship. It takes faith to answer the call of Christ. Faith is necessary if we would receive him as our Saviour from sin. Faith is also necessary if we follow him as Master and Lord. We must have a faith in Christ so great and meaningful that we will turn our lives over to him and ask him to take complete control! All of us should pray earnestly the prayer of the disciples, "Lord, increase our faith."

Christ's call to youth therefore is a call to obedience. "If ye love me, keep my commandments," the Master said. As his final commission to his disciples Jesus said, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations,

... teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." That's a mighty big order—observing *all* the exacting standards which Christ set up for his followers. We must read and ponder the teachings of Jesus as they are recorded in the Gospels until they are indelibly stamped in our minds! They should become a part of our thinking and our speaking; they should be reflected in our attitudes and our actions.

Christ is our Master and King. Our task is to follow his leading, to obey his commands.

HYMN (by entire group): "Lead on, O King Eternal."

TALK III:

A CALL TO COMPANIONSHIP

CHRIST calls youth, not only to repentance and obedience, but also to an intimate companionship with him. That is the marvelous thing about Christian discipleship. Once we meet the exacting demands of it, then we experience the most satisfying fellowship, inner peace, and joy which life can bring. Too many young people are missing the thrill of Christian discipleship because they have not completely dedicated their lives to Christ. We must follow him as Master and Lord before we can know him as divine Companion and Friend. "Ye are my friends," Jesus said, "if ye do the things which I command you." Notice the condition! If we fulfill the conditions and demands of Christian discipleship, the joys of Christian discipleship will be ours.

A young woman who is employed in the office of a large automobile sales corporation made these interesting comments about her work and her employer: "My boss is the owner of a very large business and a man of wealth and influence. He issues orders to a great many people, including me, and his orders are obeyed without question. But the reason I like my work so much is that he is not only my boss; he is also my friend. We talk together about the churches which we attend and about our Christian faith. On one occasion he went with me to the noon-hour Lenten service in our community. He treats me as a friend."

No wonder this young woman finds joy and satisfaction in her work. It is exactly the same in the Christian life. Christ is not only our divine boss, who issues commands which he expects us to obey. He is also our divine friend, and he gives joy, meaning, and motivation to our lives which no earthly friend could ever provide!

When Christian discipleship becomes real and dynamic to us, when

we have a vital experience with Jesus Christ and know him as Friend and Companion, then prayer becomes meaningful to us and occupies an important place in our lives. When we discover a true friend, we desire to spend time with him, to enjoy his companionship, to converse and have fellowship with him. So it is with Christ. When we know him as a friend, we will spend time in prayer and quiet meditation and fellowship with him; we will seek his counsel and advice daily; we will bring to him our problems, our discouragements, and our fears. The worship services of the church will take on new meaning for us. We will share with other young people what our fellowship with a divine companion means to our lives.

Christian service will also become more vital and meaningful to us. We will find a supreme joy from serving Christ and his church that we have never known before. We will realize that there is no more significant thing in all of life than helping to carry forward the program of Christ throughout the world. We will be supremely grateful that he has called us to have a part in the only work that is world-wide in scope and eternal in duration.

With Christ as our Friend and Guide we will begin at home—right where we are—to befriend the friendless, to cheer the discouraged, to help the unfortunate, to love the unlovely, to radiate Christian courage, kindness, faith, and hope among all whom our lives touch. When we lose ourselves thus in Christlike service, we will find true life—life at its radiant, glorious best!

SOLO: Stanzas 1 and 2 of "What a Friend We Have in Jesus."

LEADER (or pastor):

Christ's call to youth is a call to repentance, to obedience, to companionship with him. He invites each one of you to receive him as Saviour, to follow him as Master, to know him as Friend.

What will you do with the call of Christ? It presents to you a choice; it requires of you a clear-cut decision, the most important decision you will ever make. Answer the call of Christ eagerly and courageously, as did the disciples of old. Dedicate your lives fully and completely to Christ and receive him as your Saviour, Master, and Friend. During the moments of silent prayer tell Christ of the decision you have made for him.

PERIOD OF SILENT PRAYER (as pianist plays softly "What a Friend We Have in Jesus"):

PRAYER:

We thank thee, O Christ, for thy clear call to Christian discipleship. Give us the courage to answer thy call and to make the decision which thou art challenging us to make. Increase our faith in thee and our understanding of thy will for our lives. In thy name we pray. AMEN.

LEADER (or pastor):

It will make your decision more strong and sure if you share it, not only with Christ in prayer, but with someone else. Tell your pastor, your sponsor, or another person of your desire to answer the call of Christ and follow him in glad and full surrender.

BENEDICTION:

Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.³ AMEN.

18

Dynamic Discipleship

(Growth in Christian Discipleship)

SUGGESTIONS TO THE LEADER:

If the devotional thought entitled "My Disciple Plan" is read in unison as suggested, sufficient copies should be prepared in advance of the meeting and distributed at the beginning of the service. If desired, "My Disciple Plan" may be read by the leader rather than by the entire group.

PRELUDE: "O Jesus, I Have Promised."

CALL TO WORSHIP:

I have found my Leader;
He has led Youth down the centuries
To their best for God and man.
I follow him and count no cost—
Helping men to live his way,
Sharing his spirit,
Working for the release
Of captives, of enslaved,
Of embittered, or fearful,
And joining with him in
Making all things new.
I follow him—will you? ¹

—ROY A. BURKHART

THE LORD'S PRAYER (in unison):

HYMN: "O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee."

SCRIPTURE:

Rejoice in the Lord always: again I will say, Rejoice. Let your forbearance be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiv-

ing let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. The things which ye both learned and received and heard and saw in me, these things do: and the God of peace shall be with you. . . . I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me.²

PRAYER:

We thank thee, O Christ, that we have heard thy voice, and that thou hast called us to be thy disciples. Help us to follow thee closely and live for thee courageously, so that we may experience Christian discipleship at its thrilling best.

Give us the courage to stand for the right when those about us are compromising. Lead us safely through the temptations that surround us, so that our bodies and minds may be kept pure. Help us to be honest and true to our word, so that people can trust us at all times and under all circumstances.

Forgive us for living ordinary, mediocre lives when thou hast made us in thine own image and given us capabilities beyond our greatest imaginings. Enable us by thy strength and thy power to be radiant, dynamic disciples of thine. AMEN.

HYMN: "I Would Be True."

LEADER:

In his book *The Little Minister* James Barrie says, "The most glad-some thing in the world is the fact that many of us do not fall very low, but the saddest that, given our capabilities, so few of us rise very high."

Christ has called us to a life of Christian discipleship that is challenging, satisfying, and full of worth-while work and thrilling adventure. He has set up standards of character and accomplishment that leave us breathless when we really think of their meaning. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," he said. "Greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." Think of it! Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we should be able to do

greater works than Christ was able to accomplish during his earthly ministry.

Paul speaks of the Christian disciple attaining the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. He prays that the followers of Christ may experience the breadth and length and height and depth of the gospel, that they may be filled with all the fullness of God, and that they may know the exceeding greatness of his power! By his life and his words the apostle Paul testifies that he can do all things through Christ, who strengthened him.

When we consider these great passages from the Bible, we realize that most of us are merely scratching the surface of the Christian life. We are not drawing upon the amazing resources that are available to us as followers of Jesus Christ. We are scarcely beginning to experience the possibilities for growth, service, and radiant living that are inherent in the Christian gospel.

The apostle Paul makes this striking statement in his letter to the Galatians: "I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus." What are the signs or marks of a follower of Jesus Christ? What are the characteristics of a true disciple?

TALK I:

A DISCIPLE CARES

A TRUE disciple, one who has had a vital experience with Jesus Christ, has a real concern for people. He forgets himself as he thinks and plans and serves and cares for others. There are many marks which characterize a person who is Christ-centered and other-centered rather than self-centered. Paul lists the characteristics of a Christian thus: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control. These are the marks of Jesus which Paul says were branded on his body. They indicate that he had a deep concern for other people and an attitude of love and helpfulness toward them.

A true disciple of Christ cares enough about people and their needs to pray earnestly and specifically for them. If a person is not vitally interested in others, he will not take time to pray for them; in fact, he probably will not pray very earnestly for his own needs, much less for the needs of others. One test which we can make to determine whether or not we are growing in the Christian life is this: Is prayer more vital and meaningful to us now than it was a year ago? A dynamic Christian is a praying Christian.

A young person who is in earnest about the Christian life is deeply

concerned about the ongoing program of the Kingdom of God on earth. It makes a difference to him—a tremendous difference—whether or not the message of Christ is being presented effectively throughout our own land and to the ends of the earth. Because it makes a difference, he supports all aspects of the ministry of his own church. He takes an active part in the Christian youth movement. He is interested in and contributes to the world-wide missionary program of the church. In other words, *he cares!* He cares about people of all classes and races, and does all that he can to bring them to a knowledge of Jesus Christ.

TALK II:

A DISCIPLE DARES

A YOUNG person who is interested in dynamic discipleship has a spirit of daring adventure. He attempts great things for God. He discovers the courageous, significant deed to be done right in the midst of ordinary, everyday experiences. It may be a small deed in itself, but it gives new courage to someone who is disheartened, or it brings a person closer to God; therefore it is a thrilling, heart-warming experience.

A true disciple of Jesus Christ dares to think for himself. He is not a victim of mob psychology; he does not blindly follow the thinking and behavior of the group. He has a mind and dares to use it! He lets others know that, as a follower of Christ, he has certain moral and spiritual principles which he believes in, and which he tries to follow at all times. His associates may belittle or ridicule his beliefs, but in the long run they admire him for his convictions.

Jim Linden was a Christian and did not hesitate to let the fellows at school know it. They made light of his religious beliefs at times, and, because he spoke so often about his church, they sometimes referred to him as "church mouse." Jim and his classmates were raising money for a big senior trip the following year. They had raised the magnificent sum of \$250 and would be earning more when school opened in the fall. Who should be charged with the responsibility of caring for that important sum of money? There was very little discussion about it. The entire class was unanimous. "Let's make the 'church mouse' our treasurer," the students said with real admiration in their voices. "We know we can trust him!"

Ernie Pyle, popular war correspondent who lost his life during the last war, told of a trip which he made on a hospital ship from the Italian battle zone back to Naples. The thing that stood out in greatest

contrast to his other war experiences was the fact that this ship, unlike every other ship of war, made no effort to conceal itself. It attempted no camouflage but displayed a large, brilliant red cross. It observed no black-out but traveled with its brightest floodlights blazing. It chose to be conspicuous in order that there would be no mistake as to its identity. And enemy planes and ships and submarines respected it for what it was.

As Christian young people too many of us have been afraid to show our colors and to hold aloft our emblem, which is likewise a cross. We have not dared to radiate the brilliant light of the gospel of Christ. We have tried to camouflage ourselves, and to look and act like the environment about us. We have tried to pass as part of the landscape instead of standing out in bold relief against it. When we discover the meaning of dynamic discipleship, we will dare to be different from the crowd. We will live distinctive lives of noble purpose and high endeavor.

TALK III:

A DISCIPLE SHARES

A YOUNG person who has caught the spirit of true Christian discipleship is willing to share all that he has. First of all, he shares his Christian faith with other young people. He invites them to the church and tells them what the Christian life means to him.

A true follower of Christ also shares his material possessions. He gives liberally to his own church and to the world-wide missionary program of the church. He gives to the needy and unfortunate of his own community and throughout the world.

A disciple shares his time, his energy, and his strength. He does not guard these blessings jealously for his own selfish pursuits and pleasures. He spends his time and strength generously for the work of the church and to help those who are in need. He is radiant, enthusiastic, and optimistic—a friend of all, regardless of age, race, or class. He shares a smile and a kind word with all whom his life touches day by day. Like the Master whom he follows, he desires, not to be ministered unto, but to minister.

Two wealthy Christians, a lawyer and a merchant, joined a party that was traveling around the world. In Korea one day they saw a boy pulling a rude plow, while an old man held the handles and directed it. The lawyer was amused and took a snapshot of the scene.

"That's a curious sight! I suppose they are very poor," he said to the missionary who was acting as a guide for the travelers.

"Yes," was the quiet reply. "That is Chi Nu and his son. When the church was being built, they were eager to give something to it; but they had no money, so they sold their only ox and gave the money to the church. This spring they are pulling the plow themselves."

The lawyer and the businessman were silent for several moments. Then the businessman said, "That must have been a real sacrifice."

"They did not call it that," said the missionary. "They thought it was fortunate that they had an ox to sell!"

When they reached home, the lawyer took that picture to his pastor and told him the story. "I want to double my pledge to the church," he said. "And give me some plow work to do, please. I have never known what sacrifice for the church meant. A converted Korean has taught me!"

When we become true disciples of Jesus Christ, we will discover the meaning of sacrifice. Only we will not call it sacrifice, for the joy and satisfaction that Christian discipleship brings to our lives will transform the sacrifice into a rare privilege and pleasure. A dynamic disciple shares—eagerly and joyously—all that he is and has!

LEADER:

Each one of us should dare to take a forward step in the Christian life. If we have not already done so, we should make a clear-cut decision to follow Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. We should resolve to be more loyal to the church and to attempt a new significant service for the church. Perhaps some of us should dedicate our lives to full-time Christian service. All of us should determine to serve and honor Christ more courageously in all our daily contacts. Whatever Christ is suggesting to your heart at this moment—that you should resolve to do.

PERIOD OF SILENT PRAYER (as pianist plays softly "Just As I Am, Thine Own to Be"):

SOLO: "Just As I Am, Thine Own to Be."

LEADER:

In a spirit of prayer and dedication may we read together "My Disciple Plan."

MY DISCIPLE PLAN

If I feel I know the will of Christ, and yet if my life has not been transformed into a new creature by the power of his indwelling Presence, I am not his disciple.

If I say I follow Christ, but if I have not the mind or the compassionate love of Christ, my discipleship is a hollow thing of mockery.

If I seem to know all the answers, and if I repeat them solemnly, word by word, in psalm and prayer, but have failed to see that this, my church, is my greatest channel for loving and redemptive service, then my discipleship is a superficial thing.

And if I can look politely and callously out upon the decay of modern civilization, with its heartache and confusion, needing life, and bread, and light, and yet say, "Who cares?" then indeed I lack the burning heart of a disciple.

My discipleship will make me look humbly into the face of God, and there I will see a love I have not yet known.

My discipleship will make me look into the shriveled lives of my fellow men, and I will love them because of God's love in me—love them enough to win them to God's love.

My discipleship will lift me into that unique task in my church, my community, or the world, which only I can do; that will become my Disciple Plan.³

CLOSING PRAYER:

Dear God, speak to each one of us individually and help us to know what our own Disciple Plan should be—what significant forward steps we should be taking in the Christian life. Give us the courage to attempt great things for thee, and the strength and determination to carry out the high resolves we have made.

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. AMEN."⁴

Reaching Youth for Christ

(Youth Evangelism)

PRELUDE: "Give of Your Best to the Master."

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Use me, God, in thy great harvest field,
Which stretcheth far and wide like a wide sea;
The gatherers are so few; I fear the precious yield
Will suffer loss. Oh, find a place for me!
A place where best the strength I have will tell:
It may be one the older toilers shun;
Be it a wide or narrow place, 'tis well
So that the work it holds be only done.¹

—CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

HYMN: "Lord, Speak to Me, That I May Speak."

SCRIPTURE:

Isaiah's vision and commission:

"In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. . . . Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me."

Paul's vision and commission:

"But Saul, yet breathing threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and asked of him

letters to Damascus unto the synagogues, that if he found any that were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, it came to pass that he drew nigh unto Damascus: and suddenly there shone round about him a light out of heaven: and he fell upon the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: but rise, and enter into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. . . . And he was certain days with the disciples that were at Damascus. And straightway in the synagogues he proclaimed Jesus, that he is the Son of God."

Christ's commission to all his followers:

"And Jesus came to them and spake unto them, saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. . . . Ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." ²

PRAYER:

Our Father in heaven, we thank thee for the privilege of serving thee, of having a part in carrying thy message to the ends of the earth. Show us the part of thy great harvest field in which thou wouldst have us labor for thee. May we, like Isaiah, have a new vision of thy majesty and power, and of our own unworthiness. May we humbly answer thy call: "Here am I, Lord, send me. Use me wherever I can be of greatest service to thy Kingdom."

We pray for a clear, radiant vision of the redeeming Christ. May we trust him more completely and be more aware of his presence and power in our lives. May we meet the Master face to face and then go forth as his witnesses. In his name we pray. AMEN.

POEM:

I had walked life's way with an easy tread,
Had followed where comforts and pleasures led,
Until one day in a quiet place
I met the Master face to face.

With station and rank and wealth for my goal,
Much thought for my body and none for my soul,
I had entered to win in life's mad race,
When I met the Master face to face.

I had built my castles and reared them high
Till their towers had pierced the blue of the sky;
I had sworn to rule with an iron mace
When I met the Master face to face.

I met him and knew him and blushed to see
That his eyes full of sorrow were fixed on me,
And I faltered and fell at his feet that day,
While my castles melted and vanished away.

Melted and vanished and in their place
Naught else did I see but my Master's face.
And I cried aloud, "Oh, make me meet
To follow the steps of thy wounded feet."

My thought is now for the souls of men,
I have lost my life to find it again,
E'er since one day in a quiet place,
I met the Master face to face.

—AUTHOR UNKNOWN

SOLO: "Mid All the Traffic of the Ways," or "Take Time to Be Holy."

LEADER:

Paul had a transforming vision of the Master on the Damascus Road. All of us should have moments of prayer and meditation when Christ is very real to us and we are very conscious of his nearness. When we know Christ in a real and vital way, we will tell others about him. We will heed his commission to be his witnesses in our own community and to the uttermost parts of the earth.

A simple drama, *Reaching Youth for Christ*, will demonstrate how a group of young people with a vision of the Master can win other youth for him. In the first scene we see Bob, who is the president of a typical Christian youth fellowship, and Jim, an active member of the group.

DRAMA:

REACHING YOUTH FOR CHRIST

SCENE I:

(JIM and BOB enter, talking.)

JIM: It's good to see you, Bob. I'm glad you dropped around.

BOB: This is a visit with a purpose, Jim, and I might as well tell you about it right away.

JIM: Let's hear what's on your mind.

BOB: Frankly, I'm concerned about our youth fellowship. I don't feel that we're accomplishing the real purposes of a Christian youth organization.

JIM: Well, I don't know about that, Bob, but I had just been thinking that you're doing a swell job as president. We've been having some lively meetings of late.

BOB: We do have an enthusiastic group, but haven't you noticed, Jim, that we have the same group of young people every Sunday evening? We have a swell gang, but what are we accomplishing? I'm afraid we think chiefly about ourselves and how we can have good times together. It's been a long time since we have reached even one new young person for Christ and the church.

JIM: I hadn't thought much about it, but I think you have something there. I guess we have been a pretty self-centered bunch.

BOB: We have been, and that's what I want to talk to you about. You're just the one, Jim, to do something about this situation. We should have an Evangelism Chairman for our group, a person who will constantly keep before us the importance of winning other young people for Christ and direct us in our efforts to do that very thing.

JIM: I'm afraid I'm not the best person for the job, but I am interested in reaching other young people, even though I haven't been doing much about it.

BOB: I knew you were just the one for the job. There are plenty of young people to be won to Christ. If they are to be reached, we'll have to do our part. You'll take the job, won't you, Jim?

JIM: I'll do the best I can, Bob, but I don't know much about it. I'll need a lot of help.

BOB: We'll all have to learn together. Our pastor will be a big help. He told me the other day that he wanted some young people on the Evangelism Committee for our church. I think you should appoint several young people, Jim, to work with you, and you and your

committee should be members of the church Evangelism Committee. You'll get a lot of help in that way.

JIM: I have another idea. I know some of the young people at Southside Church, and they have been active in Youth Evangelism for some time. I'm sure several of their young people would be glad to come to one of our meetings and tell us how they carry on this part of their work.

BOB: That would be great! Let's have them come as soon as possible. And thanks heaps, Jim, for your willingness to help.

JIM: That's O. K., Bob. I'm glad you spoke to me about it. The more I think about this thing, the more anxious I am to see what our group can do to win other youth to Christ. I'll speak to the Southside young people about helping us get started.

BOB: Fine! I'll be looking forward to hearing their suggestions. (Bob and JIM *exeunt*.)

LEADER:

Let us put our imagination to work and pretend that all of us are members of Jim's and Bob's youth fellowship. Three of the Southside young people have come to share their experiences in Youth Evangelism. Jim is presiding at the meeting.

SCENE II:

(JIM, MARY, DICK, and LINDA are seated informally at a table.)

JIM: Being new at this job of Evangelism Chairman, I felt the need of some helpful advice. In fact, I thought that all of us could profit from the experiences of others, so I invited these young people from Southside Church to tell us what their group has been doing in Youth Evangelism. They will speak to us informally about the experiences which they have had.

DICK: We found that the place to start was with our own youth group. We stressed the importance of youth evangelism in our Sunday evening meetings and tried to get our entire group interested in such a project. Young people must be convinced of the importance of winning youth to Christ before they will give the necessary time and effort. Before any of us are ready to do this type of work, we must have a real concern for young people who do not know Christ.

LINDA: You're right, Dick. We must also know Christ in a real and vital way ourselves before we can share him with others. In order to carry on a successful program of youth evangelism there must be a spirit

of consecration and devotion to Christ on the part of individual members of the group. Young people must be radiant, enthusiastic Christians before they can "sell" other young people on the importance of Christ and the church.

JIM: I see now what you mean by starting with your own group. There's more to this thing than appears on the surface. I'm beginning to see that we must be willing to pay the price of full surrender to Christ before we can accomplish much in youth evangelism.

MARY: That's it exactly, Jim. We must realize the importance of being loyal to Christ on all occasions. That isn't always easy, especially when we are with young people who are careless about Christian standards and skeptical about Christ and the church. We can't win others to Christ very successfully unless our own actions are consistent with Christian principles.

DICK: You're right, Mary. We witness for Christ every day by our deeds, but we must also witness for him by our words. That is, we must be willing to speak to others about what it means to be a Christian.

JIM: I've been thinking about this matter of speaking to others about Christ. It seems to me that it would be a mighty difficult thing to do.

DICK: It isn't nearly as difficult as it seems before you have tried it. Our pastor gave us several sessions of instructions on how to approach other young people for Christ. We also attended a training conference on evangelism sponsored by our church. These instruction periods are a vital part of our program of youth evangelism.

LINDA: We discovered that keeping an up-to-date prospect list is important, too. By that I mean keeping an accurate list of the names and addresses of young people who should be reached for Christ and the church.

JIM: How did you go about contacting the young people on the prospect list? I'm getting more and more anxious to understand the "know-how" of all this!

MARY: We soon discovered that we had to go into the homes of these young people and speak to them about Christ and not wait for them to come to us. This is called "Visitation Evangelism." Our group decided to have three nights of Visitation Evangelism and give it a trial. Eight young people, or four teams, participated. We met at the church for supper for three consecutive evenings, and each team was given a group of prospect cards containing the names and addresses of the young people on whom they were to call. Our pastor

met with us each evening, giving valuable help and having prayer with us before we left the church to make our calls. The results? All of us were amazed—and humbled. We called on twenty-six young people during the three nights. Of that number seven told us definitely that they would like to become Christians, and three others promised to bring their church letters from other cities. That was six months ago, and since that time six more have united with our church, making a total of sixteen out of the twenty-six. Some of the other ten are coming to our youth meetings.

JIM: No wonder your group is enthusiastic about youth evangelism! There must have been a lot of follow-up work, to produce results like that.

DICK: You're right, Jim, and that is one of the most important aspects of youth evangelism. First of all, we planned a youth fellowship night at the church the week after our visitation program. We personally invited all the young people whom we had visited the week before. Many of them came, and we had a splendid evening of fun and fellowship. We enlisted many of our active members to invite and bring these new young people to youth fellowship meetings and to the church services. Our pastor called on all the young people who showed an interest in becoming Christians, and most of these enrolled in the pastor's Instruction Class.

JIM: Who ever dreamed there was so much involved in a program of youth evangelism! Have you done much calling since those first three nights?

LINDA: Yes, we have set aside one night a month for visitation evangelism. We have supper together at the church, give out prospect cards to each team, and after a period of prayer go out to make our calls. Some of them are follow-up calls; others are visits with young people whose names have recently been added to our prospect list.

DICK: I think we have talked about long enough, but there are two things I want to mention in closing. We have found that prayer and the use of the Bible are of great importance in youth evangelism. Linda mentioned our period of prayer before we make our calls. We have also started recently a fifteen-minute prayer period before our meeting each Sunday evening. Many of our young people attend and take part in this period of prayer, praying especially for those who are conducting the meeting on that particular evening and for the new young people whom we are contacting.

Our group has also developed a new interest in Bible study. Our

pastor has led several study groups for us on different books of the Bible and has shared with us the passages of Scripture which he has found most helpful to use in speaking to people about the Christian life. We have tried to memorize some of these verses, and we are using our Bibles more as we talk to other young people about becoming Christians.

JIM: I'm sure we have received enough ideas tonight to keep us busy in youth evangelism for a long time. We want to thank each one of you for the information and inspiration you have given us. (*Exeunt JIM, LINDA, DICK, and MARY.*)³

LEADER:

This skit has given us an idea of what can happen when a group of young people make an earnest attempt at youth evangelism. It can happen in our group too. Are we willing to "pay the price of full surrender to Christ"? Are we willing to try?

Here is a summary of the suggestions regarding youth evangelism which were mentioned. Our task now is to discover how we can make use of these ideas in our own group.

1. Create an interest in youth evangelism on the part of the entire group.
2. Develop a concern for young people who do not know Christ.
3. Encourage a spirit of consecration to Christ on the part of each member of the group.
4. Emphasize the importance of witnessing for Christ both by our deeds and by our words.
5. Attend training conferences on the meaning of the Christian life and how to speak to other young people about Christ.
6. Compile and keep up to date a prospect list of young people who should be won to Christ and the church.
7. Conduct a visitation evangelism program, during which the young people go out two by two to call on prospects and talk to them about the Christian life.
8. Plan a systematic program of follow-up. Invite the prospects to a "Fellowship Night" at the church, to youth fellowship meetings, and to church services. Follow-up calls should be made by pastor and young people.
9. Set aside one night a month for visitation evangelism.
10. Stress the importance of prayer.

11. Stress the importance of Bible study and of the use of the Bible when talking to others about the Christian life.

PLANNING PERIOD:

Specific plans should be made for a program of youth evangelism, with definite persons responsible for carrying out these plans. The following questions are suggested as a guide to aid in the planning of such a program.

1. In what ways can we create an interest in youth evangelism on the part of the members of our group?
2. Why should Christian young people feel a concern for young people who are not Christians?
3. Should we ask our pastor to lead a training conference on how to reach other young people for Christ?
4. Who should be responsible for the compiling of a prospect list?
5. Should we decide on tentative dates for a visitation evangelism program? Do we have an evangelism chairman to consult with the pastor and make plans for such a program?
6. What type of systematic follow-up should we have in order to help the young people whom we reach to grow in the Christian life and find their places of service in the church?
7. How can we make greater use of prayer and Bible study in our youth meetings and in our individual lives?

CLOSING MOMENTS OF WORSHIP:

LEADER:

The plans we have just made are of momentous importance. If, under God's leadership, we carry them out faithfully, our Christian faith will be strengthened, our prayer life will be deepened, our lives will take on new depth and meaning. Our youth group will receive new vitality and purposefulness, and through it our entire church will receive new life and vigor. Beside all this, new recruits will be won to Christ and His Kingdom. Their lives will be enriched, and their untold abilities and potentialities will be released for the Master's use. Who knows? Perhaps a William Carey or a Dwight L. Moody is among these potential Christians whom God is waiting for us to reach! Great missionary movements and other mighty spiritual awakenings have started when a small group of Christians has faced seriously the opportunities for daring and vital Kingdom service which God is

constantly providing. God will use us in a significant way if we answer his challenge tonight and are faithful to his leading.

PRAYER:

O Jesus, I have promised
To serve thee to the end;
Be thou forever near me,
My Master and my Friend.

—JOHN E. BODE

Give us the courage and daring, O Lord, to attempt great things for thee. Help us to carry out faithfully the plans we have made, not in our own strength, but with thy help and guidance. May we realize the tremendous significance of this work we are planning—both for ourselves and for those whom we shall endeavor to win to thee. May we constantly feel our need of help from thee. AMEN.

RESPONSE: "O Jesus, I Have Promised" (First stanza, by entire group).

BENEDICTION:

Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.⁴

Why I Believe in the Church

PRELUDE: "If With All Your Hearts" from *Elijah* by Mendelssohn.

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing. . . . Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.¹

DOXOLOGY:

LITANY OF SUPPLICATION:

Leader: We pray for the upbuilding and strengthening of thy Church, the great company of believers around the world.

Group: Hear our prayer, O God.

Leader: We pray that we may extend the influence and effectiveness of our own local church by the testimony of our lives and by our loyal service and devotion.

Group: Hear our prayer, O God.

Leader: We pray for great city churches, that they may minister effectively to the needs of the crowded throngs that daily pass their doors.

Group: Hear our prayer, O God.

Leader: We pray for small churches and for rural churches, that they may have a dynamic spiritual ministry.

Group: Hear our prayer, O God.

Leader: We pray for the newer churches on mission fields and for churches in places of danger and persecution, that they might be made strong by thy power.

Group: Hear our prayer, O God.

Leader: Forgive us for not giving to thy Church a greater portion of our time, our energy, and our possessions.

Group: Hear our prayer, O God.

Leader: Help us to bring honor to thee and to the Church by manifesting the spirit of Christ in all our words and deeds.

Group: Hear our prayer, O God.

Leader: In the name of Christ, who loved the Church and gave his life for it. AMEN.

SCRIPTURE:

How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God. . . . Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. . . . For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. . . . I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.²

HYMN: "I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord."

POEM:

This is my church—
I love its every stone.
I love its family—is it not my own?
It eases loads I could not bear alone.
This is my church.

This is my church—
The dwelling of my Lord.
Eternal fountain for his living word,
Where those who love him dwell in full accord.
This is my church.

This is my church—
It must attain its goal
Of giving food to every famished soul,
Of helping blind to see—the sick made whole.
This is my church.

This is my church—
I must give earnest heed
To its great program and its every need,
Else I must feel that I have failed indeed
My church—Christ's Church.

—MARSHALL M. MORGAN

SCRIPTURE:

And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. . . . Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.³

HYMN: "The Church's One Foundation."

POEM:

Wait! Church of God! in quiet contemplation
 Before his throne, where grace and truth hold sway.
 Lift up your hearts in holy adoration,
 As now to him with heart and mind we pray.
 Wait! Church of God! It is thy preparation
 On earth to strive in faith to speed his Day.

Speak! Church of God! his Gospel clear proclaiming
 To hearts in grief and broken by the wrong.
 Hold high his Cross, God's grace is there retaining,
 God's answer true, to each and to the throng.
 Speak! Church of God! nor cease thy witness, claiming
 Each soul for Christ, till all to God belong.

Go! Church of God! thy Charter of Salvation
 Take to all nations torn by war and hate.
 Thy mission high is to all God's creation
 Until God's peace shall rule each land and state.
 Go! Church of God! and by thy consecration
 God's blessing bring, and world-wide love create.⁴

—GEORGE ARTHUR CLARKE

TALK:

WHY I BELIEVE IN THE CHURCH

1. I BELIEVE in the Church because it was founded by Jesus Christ, who promised that nothing would be able to destroy it. The Church has made mistakes through the centuries. It has never been perfect,

made up as it is of very human men and women, but it has remained through the years the most dynamic and potent institution the world has ever known. It has suffered reversals and setbacks, but each time it has emerged again to conquer when all seemed lost.

Standing amid the wreckage wrought by Nazi bombers, the British king made the bold remark, "There will always be an England." Although the years have substantiated the king's faith and courage, his statement cannot be accepted as wholly true, for man-made governments cannot be eternal. There is but one institution that is everlasting, the body of believers in Christ—the Church. There will always be the Church! Not any particular denomination or sect, but the "church universal," composed of all the followers of Jesus Christ.

The story is told of a communist who declared to a French peasant, "We are going to pull down your churches and your steeples—all that recalls past ages and all that brings to your mind the idea of God."

"Friend," replied the peasant, "pull down the stars, then." The Church is as enduring as that!

The Church is a going concern. Somehow it succeeds in spite of all obstacles. William F. McDermott has written that "in 1929, Chicago had 1,600 churches and 233 banks; at the end of the depression it still had 1,600 churches, but only 54 banks. The Gibraltar of finance didn't prove as strong as the Rock of Ages." There will always be the Church!

2. I believe in the Church because it helps us know God through Jesus Christ. It gives us practical guidance in applying the principles of Christ in our everyday actions and experiences. It helps us feel the presence of God and to worship him in spirit and in truth.

Roger William Riis, well-known writer and editor, has made this satisfying discovery of the Church: "Six months ago I scoffed at the churches. Then one day, on a sudden whim, I attended a service. Since then I have been going steadily, first out of curiosity to see what the much-attacked churches are up to, lately out of rising excitement. . . .

"One Sunday last May the newspaper offered me this: 'Rotterdam is ablaze. Shooting is heard in every street.' That was the morning I happened into a church, for the first time in twenty-two years. And what did the church offer me? A simple, reverent service, featured by a sermon on 'Peter, the Rock,' on the permanence and beauty of the church.

"I found that I was acutely interested in hearing about anything that had permanence, beauty, and unselfish endeavor. It fell on my spirit like water on a desert, and I went out stirred and grateful.

"A week later I took my curiosity to another church and heard the minister, in a singularly lovely building, talk simply and beautifully on "The Ascending Life." Without a trace of sanctimonious heroics he conversed informally about the insistent demand of life to rise, to grow, to improve itself. It was adult, it was spiritual; and to me, personally, it was helpful.

"Since then, as business and vacation travel took me about the country, I have made it a point to attend and study churches—all kinds. I have tried to discover what makes the leading churches vital in their communities. And I state with assurance that the critics of the churches today don't know what they are talking about."⁵

3. I believe in the Church because it provides opportunity, not only for fellowship with God, but for the highest type of fellowship among individuals. Young people can find no place that equals the Church when it comes to making friends who are full of life, fun, and enthusiasm, and who at the same time bring out the best that is within them.

The Church makes it possible for people of all races and classes to work together at tasks that are challenging and worth while. It leaps the boundaries of tribe and nationality, and promotes fellowship and understanding among all people who bear the name of Christ. The Church is the world's great equalizer. All true followers of Christ are united by a bond of friendship, regardless of their racial, economic, or social status.

4. I believe in the Church because it emphasizes the supreme value of the individual. It champions the principles of democracy. It places service to the individual first and ministers to all the needs of man—physical, spiritual, mental, and social. The Church reaches out with a helping hand to the sick, the sorrowing, the lonely, the discouraged, and to those in need of food, clothing, and shelter. The Church gives counsel to those facing problems and temptations; it gives encouragement and assistance to those who have stumbled and made mistakes. The Church provides guidance to young people regarding educational opportunities, life vocations, courtship, marriage, and parenthood.

It is no mere coincidence that the Church has taken the initiative through the centuries in the establishment of schools, colleges, hos-

pitals, orphanages, and other institutions of helpfulness and service. It isn't an accident that medical science has developed almost entirely in a Christian environment. It isn't an accident that in the countries of the East today it is the Christian Church that is reclaiming the soil, fighting disease, overcoming illiteracy and superstition, and bringing men, women, and youth to a knowledge of Christ.

The Church is the greatest agency of righteousness the world has ever known. It has protected and promoted Christian family life. It has exerted a tremendous influence for good on community and national life. Taken as a whole, the influence of the Church has been overwhelmingly on the side of justice, honesty, integrity, and righteous living. The Church is the only institution that seeks to provide for the whole family's spiritual and social needs from childhood to old age.

5. I believe in the Church because it gives us a world-wide vision. The Church informs us of the needs and also of the spiritual victories of peoples and nations around the world. Through the miracle of missions we are able to help carry the gospel of Christ to scores of scattered tribes and nations.

William McDermott has described the perspective and vision which the Church provides:

"I like to go to church because I gain world contacts through religious affiliation. The preacher bores in deeply as he seeks the true meaning of events and their relation to life. He looks ahead for a perspective. He speaks of years, not of days; of nations, not of townships. He sees God's hand directing the world to its destiny, yet providing a firm clasp to guide wayfaring man upward. In the hurly-burly rush of daily life our vision becomes distorted. By spiritual interpretation the minister brings our daily life and its real purpose back into sharp focus.

"As a church member I belong to the largest, most cosmopolitan group in the world. The Christian faith numbers more than 600,000,000 adherents. Its charter, the Bible, is printed in more than a thousand tongues. Its major divisions, to which 70,000,000 Americans belong, are world-wide in scope."⁶

6. I believe in the Church because it provides the only effective way of carrying on Christ's work. As individual Christians we cannot hope to overcome the forces of evil. We must pool our resources in the Church. Whenever Christians work together courageously under the leadership of Jesus Christ, they make a mighty impact for truth and righteousness. As individual Christians we could never send the

message of Christ to the ends of the earth. By uniting our energy and resources we have, through the strength and power of God, achieved one of the miracles of modern time: the globe-encircling and life-transforming missionary enterprise of the Christian Church.

I believe in the Church!

HYMN: "O Where Are Kings and Empires Now?"

LEADER:

The Church can make its mighty contribution to our lives only as we give it opportunity to do so. The most soul-stirring sermon can be a blessing to us only if we are present to hear it and if we listen to it thoughtfully and prayerfully. The most inspiring service of praise and worship can lead us into the presence of God only if we are a part of the company of worshipers. Let's check up on ourselves. Are we in our places each Sunday to share with others the high privilege of worshipping God? Do we enter the services of worship in a spirit of prayerful expectancy? Do we earnestly seek the presence of God and expect that God, through his Spirit, will give us the divine wisdom and guidance which we need? Do we go forth from a service of worship strengthened and inspired to serve God and man, and to radiate the spirit of Christ in our daily contacts and activities? If we truly believe in the Church, we will gratefully receive its guidance and blessing for our own lives and do our part to extend its ministry of love throughout the community, the nation, and the world. If we believe in the Church, let us renew our pledge of love and loyalty to it.

"The Church Covenant" (to be read in unison; if your church does not have a covenant, the following pledge of loyalty may be used):

We believe in the Church.

We believe that Christ established the Church and that the Church is the agency for carrying out the will and work of God on earth.

We believe that worship with other Christians in the Church is essential to our spiritual growth and development, and that it is a tangible expression of our love for Jesus Christ.

We are grateful to the Church for its countless ministries of love and helpfulness. We love the hymns of the Church, the services of worship, the two great ordinances which are preserved by the Church in obedience to Christ's command. We are thankful for the message

and mission of the Church and for the opportunities for service which the Church provides.

We, therefore, in earnestness and humility, pledge anew our loyalty to the Church and to our Saviour, who is the foundation and chief cornerstone. We promise to pray for the Church and to give unselfishly of our time, strength, and material possessions that the ministry of the Church may be extended and that the gospel of Jesus Christ may be carried to the uttermost parts of the earth.

SOLO: "O Church of God" (tune: "Finlandia" by Sibelius).

O Church of God, our solitude forsaking,

We now unite with all who seek thy way—

With those who sing, with those whose hearts are breaking,

We lift our spirits as to God we pray.

O Church of God, our love for thee is waking,

We bring our alleluias today.

O Church of God, like bells at noonday pealing,

Thy call has come to us that we may bring

Our strength to serve, to all the Christ revealing

In deeds of love and when our hopes take wing.

O Church of God, where sin and pain find healing,

To thee our alleluias we sing.

Our spirit's home, with joy to thee returning,

Our voices join to sing our highest praise,

For hours of cheer, where friendship's fires are burning,

For strength and peace which gladden all our days.

O Church of God, for thee our hearts are yearning,

To thee our alleluias we raise.⁷

—ROLLAND W. SCHLOERB

PRAYER AND BENEDICTION:

Dear God, our Father, accept our earnest thanks for thy Church and for the rich spiritual treasure which it has passed on to each generation. We desire to pledge anew our allegiance to thee and to the Church. Show us how we can be of greater service to our own local church and to thy Church throughout the world.

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. AMEN."⁸

I Will Not Drift

(Life Vocations)

PRELUDE: "Lead On, O King Eternal."

CALL TO WORSHIP:

I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.¹

POEM:

Make thy way plain, O God! So plain
That I cannot at all mistake
The leading of its glory light.
Forbid that I should undertake
To tread another path than thine,
Make thy way plain for my poor sight!
Make thy way mine!²

—GWYNN McLENDON DAY

HYMN: "Jesus, Saviour, Pilot Me," or "He Leadeth Me."

A LIFE SERVICE PLEDGE (to be read by the leader or another young person):

I will live my life under God for others rather than for myself, for the advancement of the Kingdom of God rather than for my personal success.

I will not drift into my lifework, but I will do my utmost—by prayer, investigation, meditation, and service—to discover that form and place of work in which I can become of largest use in the Kingdom of God.

As I find my place of greatest usefulness, I will prepare for it, and follow it, under the leadership of Jesus Christ, wheresoever it takes me, cost what it may.³

SOLO: "It May Not Be on the Mountain's Height."

PRAYER:

O God, keep our hearts strong, our lives pure, our thinking straight, and our spirit humble. May we resolve that we will not drift into our work in life. Rather let us earnestly seek thy leadership and guidance in our choice of a lifework. May our dominant purpose be to follow thee in paths of usefulness and service. May we be willing to say with our lives as well as our lips: "I'll go where you want me to go, dear Lord. . . . I'll be what you want me to be." In the name of Christ, our Redeemer and Guide. AMEN.

LEADER:

The Life Service Pledge, which many young people have accepted as their purpose in life, contains several very significant phrases: "I will live my life under God for others rather than for myself. . . . I will not drift into my lifework. . . . As I find my place of greatest usefulness, I will prepare for it, and follow it, under the leadership of Jesus Christ, wheresoever it takes me, cost what it may." All of these are challenging statements, but perhaps the most practical and helpful idea of all is contained in four words: *I will not drift!*

Many of us are drifters. We take the line of least resistance. We live at our "second-best" most of the time. We read the books that require the least amount of thinking. We do just enough work at school in order to "get by." We sit passively while the movies entertain us, rather than go to the effort of developing a constructive, fascinating hobby. We let minutes and hours and days slip away without developing one tenth of our latent powers, simply because we are drifting along through life.

If we would discover a life of usefulness and purpose, we must say within our souls: I will not drift into my lifework! The Life Service Pledge states the alternative to drifting: "I will do my utmost by prayer, investigation, meditation, and service to discover that form and

place of work where I can become of largest use to the Kingdom of God."

Someone has said, "The world makes way for the man who knows where he is going." We need to be Christian youth with a purpose, our purpose being to discover the place where God would have us serve in his Kingdom.

A simple drama entitled *Finding My Place of Service* will give further help regarding the alternatives to drifting in life and in the choice of a lifework.

DRAMA:

FINDING MY PLACE OF SERVICE

(Note: The part of the pastor should be taken by a mature young person or a young adult.)

(BETTY, JACK, and RALPH enter and talk together informally.)

BETTY: I don't know how you fellows feel about the work you plan to do, but I'm getting mighty discouraged with the plans I've made for my lifework.

JACK: Why, Betty, you're the last person I ever expected to say that! You're a senior in Teachers' College. You've made excellent marks in school. I thought you were all set to teach next year. Look at me—a junior in college—and not the faintest idea of what I want to do with my life! I'm the one that ought to be discouraged!

BETTY: I have planned to teach, Jack, but I have no real enthusiasm for it. I think a person should be eager to begin his lifework if he's discovered the niche he's supposed to fill!

JACK: Well, I for one haven't found a thing yet that I can get excited about doing. How about you, Ralph? You have a good position in the bank. It must be a great feeling to be all settled in a job!

RALPH: You two are the ones who should be grateful. You have the opportunity of going to college. I did not. There is little chance for advancement without a college education. I'm discouraged about my job because I feel that I'm in a rut and there's very little I can do about it.

BETTY: We're a sorry lot as far as vocational adjustment is concerned! I wonder if most young people are in the same boat!

JACK: Say, is that Pastor Brown in the hall? It's half an hour before the other young people will be here. Let's ask him for some advice.

BETTY: That's a swell idea! (*Calling*) Pastor Brown!

PASTOR: (*Entering*) Well, look who's here! Greetings, one and all!

JACK: We want to ask you a few questions, Pastor. Here's a starter! Do you think that God has a definite lifework planned for each one of us?

PASTOR: (*Sitting down with the group*) That's a big question, Jack, and a mighty important one! Yes, I believe that God has a task which he wants each of you to do for his Kingdom, a task which you, with your particular blend of talents and abilities, can do better than anyone else. It may be that you can do this work for him in more than one setting or situation, but I am confident that he has a job for each one of you to do.

RALPH: Just what do you mean, Pastor, that we might be able to do the work God has in mind for us in more than one situation?

PASTOR: Let me give you an illustration, Ralph. A young man desires to serve Christ in a really significant way. He thinks immediately of the ministry, but he feels that he does not have just the right combination of talents for the ministry. So God leads him into another vocation, such as your own vocation, banking. He does his work well and serves Christ and the church faithfully at the same time. Later he discovers that God opens the way for full-time Christian work *right in his own field of finance*! He becomes the administrator and treasurer of a great mission field!

RALPH: (*Eagerly*) Do you mean to say that fellows like me might have a chance at full-time Christian work right in our own special fields?

PASTOR: Exactly! We are realizing more than ever before that we must have full-time Christian workers in many fields: medicine, nursing, teaching, agriculture, writing, art, music, finance, secretarial work, radio, television, engineering, preaching, counseling, evangelistic work—to mention some of the possible fields of opportunity.

BETTY: (*Enthusiastically*) Just a minute—please! I can't keep this idea any longer! You mentioned teaching in that list, didn't you? If I teach next year in public school, would there be a chance that later I might be able to enter full-time Christian work in the field of education?

PASTOR: Christian education is one of the most important and challenging opportunities of our day. If you are willing to be led, God may indeed call you into that important field of endeavor.

Now, here is the other part of the answer to Ralph's question about doing God's will in more than one situation. God may not lead you into a full-time Christian vocation, but he may enable you

to accomplish your particular task right where you are. He might direct you, Ralph, not only to be a witness for him at the bank, but also to use your experience and ability as the financial manager of a great summer camping program for young people, for example. He could use a man of your experience to head a great campaign to lift the levels of Christian stewardship and to make it possible to send dozens of new recruits to the foreign mission field.

God *may* move you to a new place of endeavor after you have proved faithful to him in your present job. But many times it is not a new place that is necessary, but a *new person*—in the same place! RALPH: (*With deep earnestness*) I see it now! My work is not just a job! It is, under God, my life service!

PASTOR: You're right, Ralph! The same principle applies to you, Betty, and your teaching. God may lead you into full-time Christian service. Or he may use you to influence boys and girls and young people for him in the public schools. At the same time he may challenge you to sponsor a strong youth program in a local church or to be the advisor of a great associational or state youth organization. The opportunities for service are limitless!

You must do your work so well and make your contacts count so effectively for Christ that he will be able to use your talents and experience in places of wider usefulness. The important thing is to *begin where you are!*

BETTY: (*Earnestly*) I see it, too. Teaching isn't just a job. It is an opportunity for me to serve Christ. It is also an opportunity to develop my talents and gain experience which Christ can use in his service in many different ways! That gives new purpose to my work at school and to my plans for the years ahead.

JACK: This has been a challenge to me too, Pastor. But I have one more question. Unlike Ralph and Betty, I do not know what vocational field to enter. How can I know God's will for my life?

PASTOR: That is the most difficult question of all, Jack, but God will give you guidance in discovering the answer. There are four words which were exceedingly helpful to me as a young man: *purpose, prayer, preparation, and practice.*

First, decide on your dominant purpose or goal in life. I think you have done that, Jack. You want to serve Christ and your fellow men. Keep that motive of service ever before you as you seek your life vocation. It will keep you from making the tragic mistake of many young people, that of entering a vocation for the sake of making

money. This goal will help you to consider only those fields of endeavor where you can be of greatest service to God and man.

Second, pray earnestly and definitely about your choice of life-work. You have trusted Christ as your Saviour and Guide. Trust him in this all-important decision. He will give you the guidance that you need. Spend time each day in prayer and meditation. Act upon your highest impulses. They are from God!

Third, prepare now for future opportunities for usefulness. Do your work thoroughly at school. Read great books—biographical, scientific, devotional—as well as books on vocational guidance. Study your Bible. Learn to think logically and clearly. Develop not only your mind, but your soul as well.

Fourth, practice now at every opportunity the important things you are thinking and learning. Above all, put in practice the principle of service. With Christ's help apply this principle in your home, at school, at church, in your social contacts. Attempt some significant service for Christ in the church. The more you serve Christ *now*, the more opportunity he will have to lead you into the field of activity where you can be of greatest usefulness.

JACK: We were mighty discouraged about our lifework before you came along and gave us the lift we needed. You have certainly helped us out in that first point you mentioned—a new purpose in life. We'll try to do something about the other three points, too.

PASTOR: That's great, Jack. Why don't we begin on the second one right now and ask God's guidance for us all? (They all bow in prayer.) Dear God, you know the earnestness of these young people. They desire to know thy will for their lives. Help each one of them to serve thee loyally now in his present situation in life. May they use their time wisely and develop their mental and spiritual powers so that you can lead them into wider areas of usefulness. Make thy way plain to us, so plain that we will not mistake thy leading. In the name of Christ we pray. AMEN.

(*Excunt* BETTY, JACK, RALPH, and PASTOR.)

LEADER:

Each one of you is a part of God's unrepeatable handiwork. No one with just your combination of capabilities has ever lived before or will ever live after you. You can do a work for Christ that no one else can do and that will never be done unless you do it. Begin where you are to live victoriously. Begin with the time that is yours. Do you

spend your time carelessly or constructively, selfishly or sacrificially? The way in which you use the free time that is yours will largely determine the heights of usefulness you will reach.

Let us bow in silent prayer and meditation as we consider again the Life Service Pledge. It may be that this pledge will express the purpose of your life as it has for many other young people.

PERIOD OF SILENT PRAYER: (Pianist may play softly "It May Not Be on the Mountain's Height." The leader may read again the Life Service Pledge, giving time for silent prayer after each paragraph.)

PRAYER:

Dear God, may each one of us hear thy still small voice speaking to him during these moments of meditation. Give us thy divine guidance in the specific problems that confront us, and grant us courage to follow thy will as it is made plain to us. Help us to love thee more devotedly and to serve thee more courageously. In the name of Christ our Lord. AMEN.

RESPONSE (as a solo): Refrain of "It May Not Be on the Mountain's Height."

I'll go where you want me to go, dear Lord,
Over mountain, or plain, or sea;
I'll say what you want me to say, dear Lord,
I'll be what you want me to be.

—MARY BROWN

LEADER:

There may be some who feel that God is suggesting to them the possibility of entering full-time Christian service. If so, it would be helpful for them to remain after the service and talk to our pastor and advisor about such a plan for their life. If there are others who have questions or problems regarding their lifework, they too are invited to remain.

BENEDICTION:

May the love of God our Father, the guidance of Christ our Saviour, and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, be with each one of us now and in all of the days ahead. AMEN.

Now More Than Ever

(Missions—General)

PRELUDE: "We've a Story to Tell to the Nations."

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Thy Kingdom, Lord, we long for,
 Where Love shall find its own;
 And brotherhood triumphant
 Our years of pride disown.
 Thy captive people languish
 In mill and mart and mine:
 We lift to thee their anguish,
 We wait thy promised Sign.

If now perchance in tumult
 The destined Sign appear—
 The Rising of the People—
 Dispel our coward fear!
 Let comforts that we cherish,
 Let old tradition die,
 Our wealth, our wisdom perish,
 If so thou mayst draw nigh.¹

—VIDA D. SCUDDER

PRAYER:

Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace. Where there is hate, may I bring love; where offense, may I bring pardon; may I bring union in place of discord; truth replacing error; faith where once there was doubt; hope for despair; light where there was darkness; joy to replace sadness. Make me not crave to be loved so much as to love. Help me to learn that in giving I may receive; in forgetting self I may find life eternal. AMEN.²

HYMN: "O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee."

LEADER:

Many church members have the idea that they are like a college student who is offered required courses and elective courses. They think of the missionary enterprise as one of the electives; they can choose it or not, according to their feelings or inclinations. They feel that it is a nice gesture to support missions—if they can conveniently do so after all their own needs and desires have been met.

The very reverse is the truth. Missions are not optional! They are a “must” for every true follower of the Master! The missionary enterprise is a required course—*now more than ever!*

HYMN: “We’ve a Story to Tell to the Nations.”

LEADER:

The Lord Jesus Christ has explicitly commanded that his followers be personally responsible for the outreach of the gospel.

READER:

As the Father hath sent me even so send I you. . . . Go ye therefore and teach all nations. . . . Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. . . . Ye shall be my witnesses . . . unto the uttermost part of the earth.³

RESPONSE (by entire group or as a solo): First stanza of “O Zion, Haste.”

LEADER:

Not only has Christ commanded the world-wide outreach of the church; the needs and conditions of the world demand it—*now more than ever!*

READER:

There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. . . . Their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes. . . . For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.⁴

RESPONSE: Second stanza of “O Zion, Haste.”

LEADER:

The love of God, as revealed to us through Jesus Christ, impels

us to share with others the precious gift of the gospel, which has been handed by others to us.

READER:

God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. . . . We love him, because he first loved us. . . . For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.⁵

RESPONSE: Third stanza of "O Zion, Haste."

LEADER:

Furthermore, our own spiritual needs require that we forget ourselves as we bear the message glorious to those about us and to the ends of the earth.

READER:

Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.⁶

RESPONSE: Fourth stanza of "O Zion, Haste."

TALK:

NOW MORE THAN EVER

THERE ARE many reasons why the missionary emphasis is the center and core of the Christian movement.

1. Christ has commanded it. In the Great Commission we find the marching orders of the Christian Church. John R. Mott once declared, "A man may accept or reject Jesus Christ and take the consequences; but once having accepted him, no man has the alternative as to whether he shall obey him or not."

The Master said: "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments. . . . Go ye therefore, and teach all nations."

2. The conditions of the world today demand that we share the life-giving power of the gospel. In the face of the fear, uncertainty, and hatreds of our day we must advance the Christian enterprise along all fronts. It is imperative that we go forward—*now more than ever!*

Minds have been tragically corrupted in our day. Under the

influence of pagan philosophies men, women, and youth have been taught to believe lies and falsehoods with a religious devotion. If our civilization is to continue, we must free men's minds by the power of one who said, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

3. The love of God impels us to share that which has meant so much to our own lives. The very nature of the Christian religion makes the missionary motive and emphasis inevitable. If we really experience the love of God as it is revealed in Jesus, if we truly know the peace and power and motivation that come from vital Christian faith, we will inevitably desire to pass along these rich blessings to others.

4. Our own spiritual needs require that we give ourselves and our possessions in unselfish outreach to others. We cannot long retain the blessings of our faith unless we are constantly sharing them with others. It is one of the great spiritual laws of the universe. We must lose ourselves in service that is motivated by love if we would find the true and abundant life.

5. The amazing power inherent in the Christian religion obligates us to carry it to all the world. We are impressed by the acts of the early apostles; let us also rejoice in the deeds of modern apostles.

The most remarkable literacy program the world has ever known, whereby illiterates in dozens of lands are learning to read in half a day, is being conducted by a Christian missionary, Frank C. Laubach.

There is Albert Schweitzer, who chose to be a doctor in the heart of Africa rather than a loudly-acclaimed organist and lecturer in the capitals of Europe. There is Kagawa, saving the slums of Japan, every hour of his life handicapped by trachoma and tuberculosis. A friend wrote of him: "He was so busy, he forgot to die."

During the last war throughout all occupied nations there were Christian leaders who defied fear and torture. Martin Niemoeller of Germany and Bishop Berggrav of Norway are symbols of the triumph of the spirit of man.

Millions have been reclaimed from ignorance, superstition, and sin by modern ambassadors of the Cross. Hospitals, schools, and churches have been erected in remote areas of the world; home life has been strengthened; communities have been transformed; caste barriers have been weakened; the outcaste has found a way to self-respect. Dare we hoard this transforming power jealously and keep it to ourselves?

6. Our debt of gratitude to Christ and to others who have passed the torch to us should compel us to help spread the light to other lands. We are Christians because thousands who have gone before have believed in missions. The Christianity of every last one of us is the gift of foreign missions. It came by no other path. Not to support missions is to deny our own history.

Someone has said that the only ones who should be excused from contributing to missions are those who wish that missionaries had never come to our ancestors, and that we were still members of pagan, barbaric tribes.

7. We should support the world-wide missionary enterprise of the church *now more than ever* because of the unusual challenges and opportunities that are present in our day. We live in a chaotic, uncertain world, but that very fact presents an amazing opportunity. Nations are in a state of transition; they are not set and fixed. People are seeking a better life; they are admitting that they need more than bread. They can be influenced today as never before by the power of the Christian gospel.

The tempo of history has been speeded up in our day. Think of the great free nations that have been born within the space of a few brief years: India, Burma, the Philippines. Christianity has a strong foothold in each one of them. Do we have the foresight to send, not dozens, but hundreds of missionaries so that these new nations will become Christian lands?

Think of the countries that are undergoing terrific change and upheaval: China, Japan, Africa, Germany, Russia. Do we have the faith and vision to see that in these lands, too, increased missionary effort is an absolute imperative—*now more than ever*?

Take Japan, for example, where Dr. E. Stanley Jones held a month of evangelistic meetings early in 1949. Dr. Jones reports a remarkable opportunity for the proclamation of the gospel in Japan:

"In Hiroshima [where the first atomic bomb fell] our meetings were packed with spiritually hungry people, and 250 made decisions to follow Christ. A pastor walked over to me in the pulpit and before the audience said, after I had spoken on the uses of calamity and sorrow, 'Sir, the fire of the Holy Spirit is burning in the hearts of the people. It is our new beginning.' Atomic fire left this city a cinder, but the fire of the Holy Spirit burning in the hearts of the people can rebuild that city and the whole country on better foundations, for it is the fire of creative love.

"In Matsuyama, where only five buildings survived our bombs, the governor's car was put at our disposal for the day. The Japanese committee charged an admission fee for our evangelistic services, yet the largest building in the city was packed with 1,500 people. In two meetings 903 made decisions. The chamber of commerce had a meeting for me. All the businessmen came, and all the officials from the governor down. A choir of high-school girls sang beautifully the 'Hallelujah Chorus' in the concrete basement of their school—all that was left of the burned-out frame building. The 'Hallelujah Chorus' from a basement—that is the spirit of this people.

"When I asked General MacArthur what message I could take from him to the American churches, he said, 'Tell them that the Christian Church has never met such an opportunity in five hundred years as it is now meeting in Japan. Where they have sent one missionary, now let them send a hundred. And let them lay plans big enough for this task. Japan cannot have a democracy without Christianity. The door will be open for another ten years.'"⁷

Surely here is convincing evidence that we need a mighty missionary advance—*now more than ever!*

SOLO: "Lead On, O King Eternal," or "God of Grace and God of Glory."

GUIDED PRAYER AND MEDITATION (as the pianist continues to play softly):

LEADER (give time for silent prayer after each statement):

Let us pray for vision—a vision of the tremendous needs and opportunities of our day.

Let us pray for the realization that a new missionary advance is an absolute imperative for our day.

Let us pray for guidance that each one of us may discover his part to play in this new missionary emphasis.

Let us pray for a more vital experience of fellowship with God through Jesus Christ, for an increased awareness of the presence and power of God in our daily lives and experiences.

Let us pray for faith to invest our all—even our very lives, if God so directs—in the world-wide mission of the church.

Let us pray for courage to follow the leadership of Jesus Christ wherever it takes us, cost what it may.

BENEDICTION:

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. AMEN.⁸

They Found the Church There

(Foreign Missions)

PRELUDE: "O Zion, Haste."

CALL TO WORSHIP:

O Master of the waking world,
 Who hast the nations in thy heart—
 The heart that bled and broke to send
 God's love to earth's remotest part:
 Show us anew in Calvary
 The wondrous power that makes men free.

—FRANK MASON NORTH

HYMN: "In the Cross of Christ I Glory."

PRAYER:

We thank thee, O God, for the Cross of Christ, which towers o'er the wrecks of time and endures in spite of man's destructive folly. We are thankful that the banner of the Cross has been carried to earth's remotest rim, and that it has brought light and life to men of every race and clime. Help us to manifest the spirit of Calvary in word and deed, and grant that we may have a part in bringing the gospel of love to our own land and to all other nations of the earth. In the name of Christ, who gave Calvary its message and meaning. AMEN.

LEADER:

"Because of missions I was feasted and not feasted upon when I fell from the sky into the native village," wrote one World War II serviceman to his mother.

The pilot of a bomber which was shot down near Buna, New Guinea, heard a voice calling him by name as he lay hidden in the bush. It was a Papuan native who had found the airman's life belt with his name on it. The Papuan, a native teacher in an Anglican Mission, led the flier to safety.

When fliers of the famous Guadalcanal Catalina Squadron were compelled to crash in the jungle, eight natives rushed out shouting, "You come along us! We take safe!" The fliers were a bit dubious, but when the natives started humming "Onward, Christian Soldiers," they knew they were in safe hands.

These are a few samples of the amazing true stories in the book *They Found the Church There* by Henry P. Van Dusen. This book, a record of firsthand experiences which servicemen had with missions during the war, answers once and for all the old query, "What is the use of foreign missions?"

"In the Southwest Pacific warfare," wrote Dr. Van Dusen, "a decisive factor in assuring the safety of countless Americans has been the heroic devotion of Christian natives. Wherever the far-flung American forces landed, they found dark-skinned natives with friendly welcome, succor, and protection; tiny mission stations with food, medical care, boundless hospitality; and a quality of life and faith which they have seldom met in 'Christian America.' They found, in short, that the church had been there before them."¹

HYMN: "Jesus Shall Reign Where'er the Sun."

SCRIPTURE:

And John went into all the region about the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. As it is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah:

The voice of one crying in the desert,
Prepare the way for God, make straight paths for him.
Every ravine shall be filled up,
Every hill and mountain shall be laid low,
The crooked shall be made straight,
And the rough roads smooth;
And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.²

POEM:

Heralds of Christ, who bear the King's commands,
Immortal tidings in your mortal hands,
Pass on and carry swift the news ye bring:
Make straight, make straight the highway of the King.

Thro' desert ways, dark fen, and deep morass,
Through jungles, sluggish seas, and mountain pass,
Build ye the road, and falter not, nor stay;
Prepare across the earth the King's highway.

Lord, give us faith and strength the road to build,
To see the promise of the day fulfilled,
When war shall be no more and strife shall cease
Upon the highway of the Prince of Peace.

—LAURA S. COPENHAVER

TALK:

THEY FOUND THE CHURCH IN NEW GUINEA

THE PAPUANS live in the southeast part of New Guinea. Because of their heroic help in caring for the wounded and maintaining supplies of food and ammunition during the defense of Australia in 1942, the Australian soldiers called them "Fuzzy-Wuzzy Angels." American servicemen soon discovered, too, that these ebony-skinned, fuzzy-haired natives were Christians of the highest order—unselfish, kind, industrious, honest, and loyal.

An Australian officer wrote thus concerning the Papuans and the missionaries who had ministered to them: "Have you realized that practically all that they have done, and will continue to do, is due to the efforts of a devoted band of men and women who have risked countless dangers and deadly tropical diseases in order to bring the gospel to these formerly benighted people? What a wonderful work theirs has been! And what a transformation has taken place here in the past half century or so. And how grateful are the native Christians for the story which has been told them and which has so uplifted them."

This same officer had about fifty native men and boys working under him. He reported that they were industrious workers and great singers. One night he went to their camp for a song fest and heard them sing their native songs as well as a number of hymns. "The grand finale," he wrote later, "was 'All People That on Earth Do Dwell,' and I think that the memory of them singing that grand old hymn, in perfect harmony, will ever remain with me. . . . As I walked back to my tent, the thought came to me of how much had been accomplished in a few short years. They are a very lovable people now, and it seems hard to realize that not so long ago they were cannibals and head-hunters."

An Air Force major described a mission center in New Guinea where a heathen cairn, or altar, was the one thing untouched by bomb or shell. The natives could remember when the victims of their head-hunting raids had been slain on this altar as an offering to their gods, and the flesh eaten. Now a large white cross had been placed upon the heathen cairn. Instead of taking part in cannibal rites, the natives were sitting in front of the cross, listening to the story of Calvary.

An Australian lieutenant sent the following statement to the Methodist mission headquarters: "It gives me pleasure to have the opportunity of expressing my admiration for the work of your missions in New Guinea. The effect of the work is very apparent even under present abnormal circumstances. As a layman, my first impressions were of the honesty, loyalty, and courage of the natives, and we have arrived at the conclusion that the credit lies mainly with the missions for their training."

The Methodist Bishop of New Guinea, who lived through the tragic war years with the people whom he served, declared: "They have shown the reality of the Christian faith so many of them profess and bear. They have done Christlike work—but, more than that, they have shown Christ to Australians. One might have expected that it would have been the other way around, that these brown people, who have but recently emerged from savagery and the stone age, would have seen Christ in the Australians. Perhaps they have. But the fact is, many Australian soldiers who perhaps never had seen the likeness of Christ in their own home life have seen him in the faces and lives of those brown Fuzzy-Wuzzy Angels."

The remarkable thing about the Papuans of New Guinea is that their transformation from barbarism, immorality, and cannibalism has taken place in a little over half a century. It was in 1891 that two Anglican missionaries waded ashore on the eastern side of New Guinea. Before the first year had ended, one of the pioneers had sickened and died. But others came to take his place, ably assisted by native missionaries from already-evangelized islands. Forty-eight years later at the same spot where the work had begun, a great cathedral was dedicated, 180 feet long, built of reinforced concrete with a seating capacity of two thousand. Erected over a period of five years at a cost of twenty thousand dollars, of which a fifth was contributed by the Papuans, it had been constructed entirely by native laborers who came in relays of three months, working without wages. The work had also extended to fifteen other centers up the coastline and into the interior.

In the same year of 1891 Methodists from Australia landed on an island off the New Guinea coast. There were 75 in the group, 65 of whom were native Christians who came as missionaries from islands already Christianized. Just twenty-five years later there were 61 churches, 219 other centers for worship, over 100 Papuan preachers, some 4,000 church members, and 25,000 church attendants!

This amazing chapter in the history of missions gives the reason why the servicemen of World War II found that the church had preceded them to the shores of New Guinea.³

HYMN: "In Christ There Is No East or West."

SCRIPTURE:

After these things I saw, and behold, a great multitude, which no man could number, out of every nation and of all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, arrayed in white robes, and palms in their hands; and they cry with a great voice, saying, Salvation unto our God who sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb. . . .

And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, These that are arrayed in the white robes, who are they, and whence came they? And I say unto him, My lord, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they that come out of the great tribulation, and they washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.⁴

POEM:

Eternal God, whose power upholds
Both flower and flaming star,
To whom there is no here nor there,
No time, no near nor far,
No alien race, no foreign shore,
No child unsought, unknown,
O, send us forth, thy prophets true,
To make all lands thine own!

· · · · ·
O God of beauty, oft revealed
In dreams of human art,
In speech that flows to melody,
In holiness of heart:
Teach us to ban all ugliness
That blinds our eyes to thee,

Till all shall know the loveliness
Of lives made fair and free.

O God of righteousness and grace,
Seen in the Christ, thy Son,
Whose life and death reveal thy face,
By whom thy will was done,
Inspire thy heralds of good news
To live thy life divine,
Till Christ is formed in all mankind
And every land is thine! ⁵

—HENRY H. TWEEDY

TALK:

THEY FOUND THE CHURCH ELSEWHERE

THE SOLDIERS, sailors, and airmen of World War II made a firsthand discovery of Christian missions in dozens of other scattered islands and remote lands.

Stanley W. Tefft, an aerial gunner in the United States Navy, declared that "a tribe of kinky-haired Solomon Island natives who once were head-hunters made practicing Christians of us. I hadn't been to church or Sunday school since I was nine. My crew mates had been taking their religion pretty casually, too. But we aren't casual any more." The natives sheltered them, hid them from the enemy, brought them food, healed their wounds, prayed for them, read the Bible to them. Soon the Americans were joining enthusiastically in their daily service of prayer and worship. When he and his companions were rescued, Tefft promised to go to church regularly. "That I have done," he writes. "I don't think any one of us will ever forget the devout faith of those natives. Maybe their prayers did more to pull us through than our own did. They had been praying a lot longer." ⁶

The armed forces also found the church in Africa. A major in the American Army summarized his appraisal of missions in West Africa: "The best cure for atheism I can think of would be a few days spent with the missionaries here. . . . If more of our people at home could see this work at firsthand, you would never again have difficulty in raising funds for foreign missions."

Servicemen likewise discovered Christian missions at work in India. A British captain wrote: "We may not have wanted to come to India, but it has meant that thousands of men who would have cherished

throughout their lives an entirely wrong conception of missionary work have been able to see that work at firsthand."

A young soldier from Milwaukee discovered that the church had preceded him to the Garo hills of Assam. "I'll try and tell you," he wrote, "about the people and about what the missionaries are doing—what I'd call an outstanding job. To think what they had to put up with at first! The Garo people, only a few years ago, were head-hunters. I've seen some of the knives they used at that time. Today they are mostly all Christians."

Thousands of servicemen discovered that Christian missions are playing a vital role in China. This is evidenced by the fact that many American military units in China gave generously to the support of missionary projects in that country.

In New Guinea, the Solomons, in Africa, India, Assam, China—in short, wherever soldiers, sailors, and airmen went—*they found the church there!* And with earnestness and enthusiasm these men of World War II, on the basis of their firsthand experiences, have proclaimed the immense vitality and worth of the far-flung outposts of the Christian Church.⁷

PRAYER:

Dear God, we thank thee for the transforming power of thy gospel, for the blessings it has brought to our own lives and to people in far-distant lands. We are grateful that even in the midst of a tragic war thousands of men discovered the amazing vitality of the Christian Church in the remote regions of the earth. May their thrilling discoveries of Christian missions increase our own interest and participation in the world-wide program of thy Kingdom. We thank thee that we can join our hearts and voices in praise to thee with Christian believers of all tribes and nations. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

DOXOLOGY (by entire group):

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

BENEDICTION:

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. AMEN.

Following the Jesus Road

(Home Missions)

PRELUDE: "O Beautiful for Spacious Skies."

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Lord, speak to me, that I may speak
 In living echoes of thy tone;
 As thou hast sought, so let me seek
 Thy erring children lost and lone.

O teach me, Lord, that I may teach
 The precious things thou dost impart;
 And wing my words, that they may reach
 The hidden depths of many a heart.

O fill me with thy fullness, Lord,
 Until my very heart o'erflow
 In kindling thought and glowing word,
 Thy love to tell, thy praise to show.

O use me, Lord, use even me,
 Just as thou wilt, and when and where;
 Until thy blessed face I see,
 Thy rest, thy joy, thy glory share.

—FRANCES HAVERGAL

HYMN: "Ye Servants of God, Your Master Proclaim."

SCRIPTURE:

And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest asked them, saying, We strictly charged you not to teach in this name: and behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. But Peter and

the apostles answered and said, We must obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew, hanging him on a tree. Him did God exalt with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins. And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

And when they had called the apostles unto them, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. They therefore departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the Name. And every day, in the temple and at home, they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus as the Christ.¹

PRAYER:

Our Father in heaven, give us a new vision of the risen, reigning Christ. May he be, in very truth, the leader and ruler of our lives. Grant us the boldness of the early disciples that we may declare our Christian faith with courage and conviction.

We pray for our country and her leaders, and for a rebirth of vital Christian faith throughout our land. We pray for all the diversified people of our nation: for the American Indians scattered throughout many states, for the American Negroes, for the Japanese and Chinese Americans, for the German, Italian, and Polish Americans, and for all the racial groups that are a part of our national life.

We pray for the teeming throngs of our great cities, for those who live and labor in our towns and villages, for those who work in factory, field, mine, or open range.

Forgive us for the sin and selfishness and intemperance that are rampant in our land. May all of us unite our energy and efforts and, under the leadership of Jesus Christ, make our nation truly great. May we—Americans all—walk together humbly and courageously, along the Jesus Road. Through Christ our Lord. AMEN.

HYMN: "O Beautiful for Spacious Skies."

LEADER:

In spite of the injustices that have been heaped upon the American Indian by the white man, the Indian has responded favorably to the white man's religion. The appeal of Christ has made a profound impression on many Indian tribes, all the way from the Senecas of New York to the Kiowas and Choctaws of Oklahoma.

Whenever the Indians have responded to the gospel of Christ, they have referred to the Christian life as "following the Jesus Road." This descriptive phrase should be a challenge to all Americans as we, as individuals and a nation, endeavor to walk in the Jesus Way.

One Indian tribe which in a remarkable way has turned from the old path to the Jesus Road is the Kiowa tribe of Oklahoma. The Kiowas were formerly a wild and warlike tribe, one of the last to be reconciled to the restrictions imposed upon them by the white man. As late as 1873, Kiowa warriors, under the leadership of Satank and Big Tree, famous Kiowa chiefs, were still making murderous raids on the white settlers in Texas.

The story of how these revengeful people were led from the war path to the Jesus Road is one of the most inspiring in missionary annals. We will hear this unusual story as if it were being told by those who actually participated in it. First we will listen to Lone Wolf, head chief of the Kiowas. (Young people will be needed to impersonate Lone Wolf, Miss Reeside, Gotebo, and George Hunt.)

LONE WOLF:

Not for long have I been a peace-loving chief. I remember with admiration the brave exploits of our warrior chiefs Satank and Big Tree. But I have visited in recent months the Wichita tribe, and I saw that things go well with them because of their Jesus school and their Jesus church. So I sent a note to Brother Murrow, the great white missionary. "I want to see you," I said to him. "I want you to tell me what I and my people must do."

Brother Murrow answered my plea. On a hot day in August he and several other missionaries came to meet me, bringing with them a young white woman from the East who was to be the missionary to our people. Brother Murrow talked to us under the trees. He told us how much a school and a church would mean to our people. He told us how much the young white woman could do for our women and children. He spoke well, and this was my reply:

"When the Great Spirit created the world, he divided it into two great seasons, the warm and the cold. The warm season brings life and light. The grass springs up; the birds sing. There is growth and development to fruit, and joy and gladness. The cold season brings death and desolation. The grass dies, the trees are bare, the fruits are gone, the animals become weak and poor, the very water turns hard. There is no joy, no growth, no gladness. You Christian white people are

like the summer. You have life and warmth and light. You have flowers and fruit, and growth and knowledge. We poor, wild Indians are like the winter. We have no growth, no knowledge, no joy, no gladness. Will you not share your summer with us? Will you not help us with the light and life, that we may have joy and knowledge and eternal life hereafter?"

MISS REESIDE:

I, Marietta Reeside, was the "young white woman" of whom Chief Lone Wolf spoke. How well I remember that meeting under the trees on a hot August day in 1892. That night I lay awake in my tent for a long time as the wind moaned through the trees. The scenes of the day came back to me. I saw again the earnest faces of Lone Wolf, Big Tree, and the other Indians. I heard again their pleading voices: "We are ignorant; we are like blind men. Tell us the right road. Show us the Jesus Road." And I prayed that night: "O thou my Guide, I will follow thee through toil, loneliness, and privation, if thou wilt permit me to lead these men and women to thee."

I began visiting the many scattered camps of the Kiowas and learned to know and appreciate the Kiowa people. They graciously accepted me into their camps and soon gave to me an Indian name, a beautiful name. They called me Aim-de-co, which means "Turn the other way." This is the way one of the Kiowa chiefs explained my new name: "We were following the wrong road. She came a long journey from home to tell us to turn the other way and follow the Jesus Road."

We explained the meaning of the Christian life many times to the Kiowas. After a while in some of our meetings we gave them an opportunity to turn from the old life and walk boldly upon the Jesus Road. After days of anxious waiting and prayer, a Kiowa woman responded to the invitation. And would you guess who it was! It was Omboke, wife of Chief Big Tree, the very chief who had led the bloody raids into Texas. The next Kiowa to become a follower of Jesus was a man, Gotebo. I would like for you to know Gotebo, for he became one of the strongest Christian leaders among the Kiowas."

GOTEBO:

I am thankful for Aim-de-co, the missionary you sent to us, for she showed us how to walk in the Jesus Road. It is much better to walk in the Jesus Road than in the old crooked road. Nine of us were the first members of our tribe to follow Jesus in baptism. The next year the

Kiowas gave 160 acres of land for a mission, and before long we built a church at Rainy Mountain, Oklahoma, the first Kiowa church.

Four years after I became a follower of Jesus, I wrote these words to Brother Murrow: "I am not tired walking in Jesus' Road. No, I am growing stronger in it. The talks Mr. Clouse gives in the church help me, and I grow stronger the more I learn of God's Word. I feel as you do about the Kiowas. I am hungry to see them all come into the Jesus Road and be saved. Oh, how good is Jesus' Road! I love it more and more. I have no words to tell how good it is. Those words you sent me from the Bible are true. God never slumbers nor sleeps, and he is with me when I go out and when I come in. I wish that every tribe of Indians would follow Jesus—Kiowa, Comanche, Apache—all. Tell my Choctaw brothers to put all their trust in God, and he will help them in every difficulty about their land, and all other ways."

This is still my testimony for Christ.

MISS REESIDE:

The Kiowas progressed very rapidly in their knowledge of the Christian life and of civilized ways. In three years the new church had grown to a membership of fifty, with an active missionary society of twenty-five.

One reason for the progress made by the Kiowas was the help given us in our work by Julia Given, who, interestingly enough, was the daughter of Satank, the famous Indian raider. I persuaded her to return to her own people from Pennsylvania, where she had become thoroughly accustomed to civilized ways. She was an earnest Christian and anxious to help her people, but revolted at the thought of returning to primitive tepee life. After arrangements were made for her to live with me, she returned to Oklahoma and was a wonderful help in winning her people to the Christian way of life.

Imagine my dismay when, several years later, I discovered that George Hunt, a pagan Kiowa who made no profession of faith in Christianity, had persuaded Julia to secretly leave the mission with him to become his wife! Julia was such an earnest, talented Christian and had said so many times that she could never return to primitive Indian life, that it seemed incredible for her to be married according to the old pagan Indian customs.

Perhaps my faith in the power of God was not as great as it should have been, for one month later Julia Given and George Hunt reappeared and asked Mr. Clouse, our missionary, to unite them in Christian mar-

riage. George Hunt showed an earnest desire to become a follower of Christ. He later became one of the deacons of our church, a strong and true Christian leader. I know you would like to hear from him.

GEORGE HUNT:

I hope Miss Reeside has forgiven me for taking Julia away from her. Of course I didn't actually take her away, for Julia has continued her work of winning our Kiowa people to the Jesus Road. Julia and I are thankful for Jesus Christ, for our church, our Christian home, and for the Christian people who have sent missionaries to us, thus making possible all these blessings.

To take the gospel to the untamed tribes of Indians in the Southwest was not an easy task. The missionaries came and lived among us, ate what we ate, lived in tepees as we lived, and in time the wild Indian began to realize that these missionaries had a true religion and brotherly love, and we began to find happiness in Christianity.

The early missionaries came to a difficult country, with a mountain range to climb, often in blinding blizzards and insufferable cold or blistering heat; they had unknown rivers and creeks to cross, often with the added danger of perilous quicksands; they had long distances to travel in wind, rain, hail, and electrical storms, and many other hardships. Today the work of the pioneer missionaries goes on. They did not live in vain. We now have four churches on the Kiowa field. Our people are engaged in modern pursuits. They are worshipping the true God and educating their children. We are proud to do honor to the missionaries who were so brave in carrying the gospel to the many who were in need of the Light of the world.

MISS REESIDE:

Those of us who have had a part in bringing the message of Christ to the Kiowas are grateful for these words of appreciation by our Indian friends. We would add our word of praise for the Kiowa people who have accepted the Jesus Way. They have been loyal to their Christian faith and have become faithful workers in their churches. They have provided Christian homes for their children and have encouraged their children to enter paths of usefulness and service. Ioleta, the youngest daughter of Julia and George Hunt, graduated from Bacone College, the Baptist College for Indians. Through the help of Indian friends she was then able to attend Keuka College in New York state, becoming the first Kiowa girl to receive the Bachelor of Arts degree.

After returning to Oklahoma, Ioleta accepted a position as a teacher in a poverty-stricken community, in order that she might be of service to her people in the name of Christ. Other Kiowa young people are likewise rendering significant service for Christ and for the Indian people.

I am grateful to God for the privilege of helping the Kiowa Indians to follow the Jesus Road. My earnest prayer is that all the Indian tribes and all other Americans may walk together along the Jesus Way, the way of peace and love.²

SOLO: "From Ocean unto Ocean" (tune: "Lancashire").

From ocean unto ocean
Our land shall own thee Lord,
And, filled with true devotion,
Obey thy sovereign word.
Our prairies and our mountains,
Forest and fertile field,
Our rivers, lakes, and fountains,
To thee shall tribute yield.

O Christ, for thine own glory,
And for our country's weal,
We humbly plead before thee,
Thyself in us reveal;
And may we know, Lord Jesus,
The touch of thy dear hand;
And, healed of our diseases,
The tempter's power withstand.

Our Saviour King, defend us,
And guide where we should go;
Forth with thy message send us,
Thy love and light to show;
Till, fired with true devotion,
Enkindled by thy Word,
From ocean unto ocean
Our land shall own thee Lord.

—ROBERT MURRAY

PRAYER:

We desire, O Christ, to walk with thee in paths of love and service. We pray for all the citizens of our land, that they may turn from the way of selfishness and follow the Jesus Road. Use us in thy great plan for bringing America to thy way of righteousness and peace. In thy name we pray. AMEN.

RESPONSE (as a solo):

Americal Americal
God shed his grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea. AMEN.

—KATHARINE L. BATES

BENEDICTION:

May the Holy Spirit be our guide as we go forth to walk in the Jesus Way. AMEN.

OUTDOOR WORSHIP PROGRAMS

25

This Is My Father's World

CALL TO WORSHIP:

The heavens declare the Glory of God;
And the firmament showeth his handiwork.
Day unto day uttereth speech,
And night unto night showeth knowledge.¹

RESPONSE (by entire group or as a solo):

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts!
Heaven and earth are full of Thee!
Heaven and earth are praising Thee,
O Lord most high!

THE LORD'S PRAYER (in unison):

POEM:

God of the glorious sunshine,
God of refreshing rain,
Whose voice bids earth awaken
And clothe itself again
With life of richest beauty
In plant, in flower, and tree;
Thou God of light and splendor,
We rise and worship thee.

God of hill and mountain,
Of valley and of dale,
Whose finger paints the rainbows;
Thy beauties never fail
To raise our souls in wonder,
And turn our thoughts to thee;

Thou God of living nature,
We stand and worship thee.
—THOMAS PAXTON

HYMN: "This Is My Father's World."

HYMN STORY:

THIS IS MY FATHER'S WORLD

THE HYMN which we have just sung is a beautiful expression, not only of appreciation for God's universe, but also of spiritual depth and insight. It was written by a minister, Dr. Maltbie Babcock, who was born in Syracuse, New York, in 1858. Dr. Babcock was an outstanding student of Syracuse University because of both his scholarship and his athletic ability. He was a leader in college athletics, being an expert swimmer and a star baseball pitcher. In every respect he was a splendid example of sturdy manhood.

Few people have enjoyed the out-of-doors as did Dr. Babcock. Although all his pastorates were in cities—Lockport, Baltimore, and New York—he never lost an opportunity to go to the country, where he enjoyed the beauty of mountains, skies, forests, and the sea. There was a deep ravine about two miles from Lake Ontario which he frequently visited. It was probably on one of his visits to this spot that he received the inspiration to write this hymn.

The beauty of nature brought to Dr. Babcock not only joy, but a revelation of God himself. He saw God in the beauty of the lily, in the song of the birds, in the rustling of the grass. In fact, God spoke to him everywhere—in field, in forest, and in stream.

The author strikes a different note in the third stanza. Praising God and reveling in the beauty about us are not all of life. The evil in the world should be corrected. Religion should not be something to be enjoyed in a passive way, but it should be an active force against evil. Dr. Babcock reminds us

That though the wrong seems oft so strong,
God is the Ruler yet.

This same thought is expressed in a stanza of the original poem which is not included in many of our hymnals.

This is my Father's world:
Why should my heart be sad?

The Lord is King: let the heavens ring!
 God reigns: let the earth be glad! ²

—MALTBY D. BABCOCK

SCRIPTURE:

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! ³

HYMN STORY:

FOR THE BEAUTY OF THE EARTH

THIS joyous hymn of praise was written, not by a minister, but by a teacher. Folliott S. Pierpoint was born in Bath, England, in 1835 and died there in 1917. He was a graduate of Cambridge University and taught at Somersetshire College. He published three collections of poems and is remembered chiefly for these verses.

Though we have in our hymnals only half of the original poem, we can count at least fifteen things to be thankful for. Included in this list of reasons for thanksgiving are the beauty of earth and sky, the love which surrounds us from birth, the wonder of day and night, the joy of human love, and the sacrificial ministry of the Church.

There is one beautiful stanza which is usually omitted from our hymnals:

For the joy of ear and eye;
 For the heart and mind's delight;
 For the mystic harmony
 Linking sense to sound and sight:
 Lord of all, to thee we raise
 This our hymn of grateful praise.

—FOLLIOTT S. PIERPOINT

HYMN: "For the Beauty of the Earth."

POEM:

O God, we thank thee for everything!

For the sea and its waves, blue, green and gray and always wonderful;
For the beach and the breakers and the spray and the white foam on
the rocks;

For the blue arch of heaven; for the clouds in the sky, white and gray
and purple;

For the green of the grass; for the forests in their spring beauty; for the
wheat and corn and rye and barley.

For the brown earth turned up by the plow, for the sun by day, and the
dews by night;

We thank thee for all thou hast made and that thou hast called it good.

For all the glory and beauty and wonder of the world;

For the glory of springtime, the tints of the flowers and their fragrance;

For the glory of the summer flowers, the roses and cardinals and clethra;

For the glory of the autumn, the scarlet and crimson and gold of the
forest;

For the glory of winter, the pure snow on the shrubs and trees.

We thank thee that thou hast placed us in the world to subdue all
things to thy glory,

And to use all things for the good of thy children.

We thank thee! We enter into thy work, and go about thy business.⁴

—EDWARD EVERETT HALE

SCRIPTURE:

Rejoice in the Lord always: again I will say, Rejoice. Let your forbearance be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.⁵

HYMN STORY:

GOD, WHO TOUCHEST EARTH WITH BEAUTY

THE INSPIRING words of this hymn were written in 1927 by Mary S. Edgar for use at a young people's conference at Lake Geneva. They reflect the rare beauty of that conference spot and have been a great challenge to thousands of young people.

This nature hymn suggests more than the wonders and beauty of God's universe. It expresses the longing of Christian youth to radiate beautiful qualities of mind and soul, the longing for loveliness of character corresponding to the loveliness of God's world about us.

The hymn is in the form of a prayer of singular beauty and meaning. May these words be the earnest prayer of each one of us.

SOLO: "God, Who Touchest Earth with Beauty" (tune: "Geneva").

God, who touchest earth with beauty,
Make me lovely too,
With thy Spirit recreate me,
Make my heart anew.

Like thy springs and running waters,
Make me crystal pure,
Like thy rocks of towering grandeur
Make me strong and sure.

Like thy dancing waves in sunlight,
Make me glad and free,
Like the straightness of the pine trees,
Let me upright be.

Like the arching of the heavens,
Lift my thoughts above,
Turn my dreams to noble action,
Ministries of love.

God, who touchest earth with beauty,
Make me lovely too,
Keep me ever, by thy Spirit,
Pure and strong and true.⁶

—MARY S. EDGAR

HYMN STORY:

DAY IS DYING IN THE WEST

THIS HYMN is a favorite among young people and is sung each year at hundreds of summer vesper services. It was written for that very purpose—to be used as a vesper prayer at the original Chautauqua services on Chautauqua Lake in western New York.

Mary A. Lathbury, who wrote the beautiful words, was born in 1841 at Manchester, New York. She played an important part—as artist, writer, and poet—in the development of the famous summer conferences at Chautauqua. She is remembered also for her well-known hymn “Break Thou the Bread of Life.”

The music for this hymn is appropriately named “Chautauqua.” It was written to fit the words and the place by William Sherwin, who was director of music at Chautauqua at that time. On the evening that the hymn was first used, Dr. Sherwin stood in a small boat on the lake and, accompanied by a cornetist, taught the new hymn to the throng of people standing on the shore.

May this hymn be our heartfelt expression of praise to God.

HYMN: “Day Is Dying in the West.”

POEM:

Those evening clouds, that setting ray,
And beauteous tints, serve to display
Their great Creator's praise;
Then let the short-lived thing called man,
Whose life's comprised within a span,
To him his homage raise.

We often praise the evening clouds,
And tints so gay and bold,
But seldom think upon our God,
Who tinged these clouds with gold.

—SIR WALTER SCOTT

PRAYER:

O God, creator and sustainer of the universe, as we look about us upon the wonders of the earth, help us to think of thee, who hast provided for us this wealth of beauty. May we hear thy voice in the rustling trees and in the song of birds. May we hear thee speaking in our minds and hearts as we wait before thee in the quiet of this evening hour.

Give us a greater awareness and appreciation of the beauties of earth, sky, field, and flower. May we also have a more earnest desire for a loveliness of soul and spirit which is akin to the glories of thy universe. Help us to think upon those things that are true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, and of good report. May we manifest a spirit of love and beauty in our every word and deed. Grant that we may carry with us into our busy day-by-day lives some of the peace and loveliness of this quiet spot. In the name of Christ our Redeemer. AMEN.

RESPONSE (by a quartet which is hidden from view): "Now the Day Is Over."

BENEDICTION:

May the peace of God, so beautifully suggested by the stillness of the evening hour, be with you now and evermore. AMEN.

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The Message of a Tree

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Forests are made for weary men,
That they may find their soul again.
And little leaves are hung on trees
To whisper of old memories.
And trails with cedar shadows black
Are placed there just to lead men back
Past all the pitfalls of success
To boyhood's faith and happiness.
Far from the city's craft and fraud,
O Forest, lead me back to God! ¹

—MARY CAROLYN DAVIES

PRAYER:

As we look upon the wonders of thy handiwork, O God, may we be reminded of thee and of thy nearness to us. May we be reminded too of Christ, who is fairer far than even the glories of thy universe. We thank thee for the beauty and loveliness about us and for Jesus, who has taught us how to make our lives lovely too. In his name we pray. AMEN.

HYMN: "Fairest Lord Jesus."

OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE:

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor

sinner in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.²

POEM:

The kindest thing God ever made,
His hand of very healing laid
Upon a fevered world, is shade.

His glorious company of trees
Throw out their mantles, and on these
The dust-stained wanderer finds ease.

Green temples, closed against the beat
Of noontime's blinding glare and heat,
Open to any pilgrim's feet.

The white road blisters in the sun;
Now half the weary journey done,
Enter and rest, O weary one!

And feel the dew of dawn still wet
Beneath thy feet, and so forget
The burning highway's ache and fret.

This is God's hospitality,
And whoso rests beneath a tree
Hath cause to thank him gratefully.³

—THEODOSIA GARRISON

HYMN: "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee."

NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE:

Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.⁴

TALK:

THE MESSAGE OF A TREE

1. A TREE, first of all, is a message of loveliness. That is apparent, even to a casual observer. There are tall, stately trees—like the oak, the redwood, the pine, and the palm tree—that are majestic and awe-inspiring. The palm is probably the most beloved tree of the Bible. Scholars have named more than 250 varieties of palm trees in Palestine. The Hebrew word for palm is *tamar*, and because of the beauty of this tree the name is frequently given to Hebrew women.

2. A tree is likewise a message of unselfishness. The tree offers its shade freely to all who pass by. Who has not experienced the cool comfort of a wide-spreading shade tree on a hot summer afternoon?

The kindest thing God ever made,
His hand of very healing laid
Upon a fevered world, is shade.

Many trees also give unselfishly of their fruit, thus providing an important part of man's food. The psalmist compares a righteous man to a tree planted by streams of water, that brings forth fruit in its season. What a splendid comparison! We are to send down deep roots into rich spiritual soil, or, as the apostle Paul said, we are to be rooted and grounded in the love and knowledge of Christ. We are to draw freely from the "water of life," which is found in Christ, even as the tree draws sustenance from the streams of water. Then we will be able to bear fruit in accordance with the will of Christ, who said, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." On another occasion Jesus said, "By their fruits ye shall know them," and "Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit."

What is this fruit which we as followers of the Master should share freely with all who pass by? Paul gives us a straight-to-the-point answer: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Are we manifesting fruit of this quality in our daily living?

3. A tree is also a message of hope. When travelers on burning desert sand see in the distance a clump of trees, they are inspired with new hope and courage. For the trees mean not only soothing shade from the sun's hot rays, but also the presence of water.

A tree is a message of hope each year with the return of spring. When

the tree, bleak and barren throughout the winter, sends forth tiny buds, then a magnificent array of leaves, we are reminded of the hope that we have in Christ of life after death. But the skeptic sneers: "The tree does not really die in the autumn. It only appears to be dead. If it were truly dead, it could not send forth new leaves in the spring." To which the faith of the Christian replies: "Neither does the soul of man really die at death. It only appears to be dead, because it no longer needs the house in which it has been living. Therefore, like the tree, man shall be clothed anew, in the springtime of life's tomorrow."

4. A tree is a message of sacrifice. The tree gives its life for the protection and well-being of humanity. Think of the uses of a tree: wood to burn for warmth, lumber for homes to provide shelter, wood for furniture to provide comfort, wood pulp for paper and books to enlighten the mind. Here is a splendid illustration of the principle of the giving of one life for the good of others.

And then there is the supreme illustration of this principle: the sacrifice of the Son of God for the sins of man. And that sacrifice was made *upon a tree!* The Cross of Christ! Let us think of it and its mighty significance when we behold a tree.

A tree, one of the most inspiring of God's creations, is a message of loveliness, a message of unselfishness, a message of hope and of sacrifice.

Solo:

I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.
A tree whose hungry mouth is pressed
Against the earth's sweet-flowing breast;
A tree that looks at God all day,
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;
A tree that may in summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair;
Upon whose bosom snow has lain;
Who intimately lives with rain.
Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.⁵

—JOYCE KILMER

POEM:

Let me stand upon the hilltop
Like a tree against the sky.
Let me mark the way for travelers—
Rooted deep, and pointing high.
Here surveyors chart their courses,
Climbers, lost, regain the trail,
Kneel, with new and clearer vision
Of the long-sought Holy Grail.
Keep me pure, O Breath of God,
Worthy of this crest so high!
Help me stand upon the hilltop
Like a tree against the sky.⁶

—J. LESTER HANKINS

PRAYER:

May our lives be challenged, our Father, by the message of a tree. May we radiate more loveliness, more unselfishness, and a spirit of hope and sacrifice. Help us to be firmly rooted and grounded in the knowledge of Jesus Christ and to bear fruit that brings honor to him. Accept our thanks for the beauty and loveliness of a tree. In the name of Christ. AMEN.

RESPONSE (by the soloist):

Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.

BENEDICTION:

May the beauty of thy universe fill our minds and enrich our lives now and through the days ahead. AMEN.

The Message of a Garden

CALL TO WORSHIP:

They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint. Be still, and know that I am God.¹

RESPONSE:

The Lord is in his holy temple,
The Lord is in his holy temple,
Let all the earth keep silence,
Let all the earth keep silence before him,
Keep silence, keep silence before him.

PRAYER:

May this spot, our Father, be a place of quietness and of prayer. May we experience a calmness of spirit that will enable us to feel thy nearness and to commune with thee. May our strength be renewed as we come into thy presence. AMEN.

HYMN: "God of the Earth, the Sky, the Sea."

POEM:

The Lord God planted a garden
In the first white days of the world,
And He set there an angel warden
In a garment of light enfurled.

So near to the peace of Heaven,
That the hawk might nest with the wren,
For there in the cool of the even
God walked with the first of men.

And I dream that these garden closes
With their shade and their sun-flecked sod

And their lilies and bowers of roses,
Were laid by the hand of God.

The kiss of the sun for pardon,
The song of the birds for mirth,—
One is nearer God's heart in a garden
Than anywhere else on earth.²

—DOROTHY F. GURNEY

SCRIPTURE:

And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. . . . And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. As the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden into the which he entered, and his disciples. And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oft times resorted thither with his disciples.

And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.³

HYMN: "There Is a Green Hill Far Away."

TALK I:

A GARDEN BRINGS US CLOSER TO GOD

A garden is a holy spot
For anyone can see
God's footprint in each garden plot,
God's hand on every tree.

—ANNE CAMPBELL

It was in a garden—the Garden of Eden—that God placed the first man and woman. The word "Eden" means delight. God planned that

a garden should be a place of joy and of close fellowship with him. Adam and Eve walked and talked with God in the first garden of the world until they allowed sin to spoil their relationship with their Creator.

A garden necessitates planning and planting, waiting and tending. All of these are healthful exercises for the soul of man. The planting of a seed indicates, whether we realize it or not, a faith in the wisdom of God's laws and a desire to co-operate with God in the carrying out of his purposes for the earth. This very act of working with God and observing the workings of his laws may, if we think about the significance of what we are doing, bring us into closer relationship with our Maker. For us to plan and plant a garden, however, without a thought of God, is an act of ingratitude.

A garden will prove of greatest blessing if it becomes for us not only a place of work and relaxation, but also a place of meditation and communion with our God. If we are spiritually alert, the beauties of a garden will help us feel the presence of the eternal God. If we have ears that are attuned to him, we can hear him speak to us through the song of a thrush, the beauty of a rose, the whisper of the breeze in a willow tree. The poet has declared:

One is nearer God's heart in a garden
Than anywhere else on earth.

SOLO: First stanza of "In the Garden."

TALK II:

A GARDEN REMINDS US OF LIFE

LIFE is like a garden. It can be beautiful, fragrant, and fruitful when proper care is given to it. A good gardener carefully nurtures the seeds which he plants. How much more painstaking we should be in the care of the garden of life! We should allow only choice thoughts, desires, and attitudes to grow in our garden. We should nurture carefully every high ideal, noble thought, and radiant vision, for they are flowers of exquisite fragrance and hue. At the same time we should remove all jealousy, bitterness, hatred, self-pity, and impurity, for these are weeds that will choke out the plants which are fair and beautiful. Weeds can spoil a garden; sin can spoil a life.

A garden is dependent upon God; it requires light and sun and refreshing rains. We too, for the nourishment of the garden of life, should

draw freely upon the sunshine of God's love. If our garden is to be divinely fair, we must also drink of the water of life, which Christ has provided for us. Jesus said, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

In the desert areas of the western part of our country a strange sight may be observed. On one side of the highway are sand dunes and sagebrush. Directly opposite, on the other side of the road, is a veritable garden—tall palm trees, soft grass, and waving grain. The one side has no water, while the other side is amply supplied with water from great irrigation ditches.

Even in Death Valley there are a few weeks toward the end of May when rain falls. Almost immediately there springs up a quick growth of grass and flowers—an unsuspected garden waiting only for the arrival of rain.

The transforming power of Christ is the water necessary for life's garden. A life as barren as a desert may blossom with beauty and loveliness. It needs only to yield itself to the love of God. The resources of God are available to us. The amazing privilege of prayer is ours for the using. When we earnestly seek him, God speaks to us and gives us the guidance and help we need as we plant and nurture the garden of life.

SOLO: Second stanza of "In the Garden."

TALK III:

A GARDEN REMINDS US OF CHRIST

A GARDEN reminds us of the most significant events in the life of the Master. It was to the Garden of Gethsemane that Jesus went on the night of his betrayal, after his last supper with his disciples in the upper room. Gethsemane was for Jesus a garden of prayer. He went there frequently for fellowship with his disciples and with the Father. On the night of his betrayal in the garden he prayed in agony the immortal prayer: "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." He arose from his prayer with renewed strength and power. "Rise," he said to the sleeping disciples. "Let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me." He was ready for the kiss of betrayal and for the cross.

We read in the Scriptures that "near the place where he was crucified, there was a garden." This suggests that there is a garden near

every cross, if we only have eyes to see it. The garden near the cross of Calvary belonged to Joseph of Arimathea, a secret follower of the Master, who secured permission from Pilate to bury the body of Jesus in a new tomb which had been hewn in his garden.

A garden is ever a place of miracles. Think of the miracle of bursting bud and blossoming flower with each recurring spring! The garden of Joseph of Arimathea was the scene of earth's greatest miracle, the miracle of Easter, the triumph of Christ over sin and death.

A garden may be for each of us a message of the risen, triumphant Christ. It may be a place of prayer and peace, a place of divine fellowship as we walk and talk with our God.

SOLO: Third stanza of "In the Garden."

LEADER:

May this place of beauty be for us a garden of prayer, where we listen in silence as God speaks to our hearts and minds.

PERIOD OF SILENT PRAYER:

CLOSING PRAYER AND BENEDICTION:

Speak to each one of us, our Father, in the beauty and stillness of this hour. Help us to know thy will and to have the courage to translate it into action during the days ahead. May a garden ever remind us of the Master, who, in a garden long ago, triumphed over sin and the grave.

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. AMEN." ⁴

The Bible and God's Universe

CALL TO WORSHIP:

O praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. Praise ye the Lord.¹

DOXOLOGY:

POEM:

I took a day to search for God,
And found Him not. But as I trod
By rocky ledge, through woods untamed,
Just where one scarlet lily flamed,
I saw His footprint in the sod.

Then suddenly, all unaware,
Far off in the deep shadows, where
A solitary hermit thrush
Sang through the holy twilight hush—
I heard His voice upon the air.

And even as I marveled how
God gives us heaven here and now,
In a stir of wind that hardly shook
The poplar leaves beside the brook—
His hand was light upon my brow.

At last with evening as I turned
Homeward, and thought what I had learned
And all that there was still to probe—
I caught the glory of His robe
Where the last fires of sunset burned.

Back to the world with quickening start
I looked and longed for any part

In making saving Beauty be . . .
And from that kindling ecstasy
I knew God dwelt within my heart.²

—BLISS CARMAN

HYMN: "For the Beauty of the Earth."

LEADER:

Scattered throughout the Bible are passages which speak eloquently of God's great universe. Not only are these portions of God's Word rare gems of beauty; they also contain great truths which should become a part of our thinking and living.

Consider first a few of the great passages which proclaim God as the creator of the universe.

SCRIPTURE:

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. . . . And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that it was good.

And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also.

The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods. . . . By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the Lord: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.³

HYMN: "My God, I Thank Thee."

LEADER:

Some of the most eloquent and inspiring passages of the Bible are those which describe the beauty and glory of the universe and the power and majesty of God.

SCRIPTURE:

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honor and majesty: who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain: who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: who maketh the clouds his chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind: who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire: who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed forever.

O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches. . . . The glory of the Lord shall endure forever: the Lord shall rejoice in his works.⁴

HYMN: "O Worship the King."

LEADER:

The Bible has a great deal to say about man, the noblest of all God's creations, whom God made in his own image and to whom he gave dominion over all the other works of his hand.

SCRIPTURE:

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. . . . And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and

breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! ⁵

QUARTET OR DUET: "Come, Sound His Praise Abroad," or "From All That Dwell Below the Skies."

LEADER:

The Scriptures make very plain the gracious providence of God, the loving care which God provides for all his creation, especially for man, whom he has created in his own likeness. This theme is prominent in the Old Testament; it is more fully expressed by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount.

SCRIPTURE:

He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills. They give drink to every beast of the field: the wild asses quench their thirst. By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, which sing among the branches. He watereth the hills from his chambers: the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works. He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth.

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye

not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.⁶

HYMN: "Now Thank We All Our God," or "O God, Our Help in Ages Past."

LEADER:

The Scriptures emphasize the laws of the universe—how certain and steadfast they are. The Bible depicts God as a God of law and order.

SCRIPTURE:

While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.

Stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God. Dost thou know how God layeth his charge upon them, and causeth the lightning of his cloud to shine? Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds, the wondrous works of him who is perfect in knowledge?

The law of Jehovah is perfect, restoring the soul: the testimony of Jehovah is sure, making wise the simple. The precepts of Jehovah are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of Jehovah is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of Jehovah is clean, enduring forever: the ordinances of Jehovah are true, and righteous altogether.⁷

QUARTET OR DUET: "Praise the Lord! Ye Heavens, Adore Him," or "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee."

LEADER:

God has not only established dependable laws for his physical universe; he has also set up spiritual laws for the guidance and benefit of mankind. One important reason for the study of God's Word is that we might discover these great spiritual principles and govern our lives

according to them. Only when we live in accordance with God's laws will we discover true joy, satisfaction, and peace of mind.

The great spiritual laws of the universe are found chiefly in the New Testament, and they center around the life and teachings of Jesus. The laws of the Old Testament were far in advance of other moral codes of the day in which they were written, but Jesus lifted the standards of life still higher. He is the final answer, the supreme good. He is the fulfillment of all that went before.

SCRIPTURE:

Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.⁸

QUARTET OR DUET: "Lord of All Being, Throned Afar."

POEM:

The heavens declare thy glory,
The firmament thy power;
Day unto day the story
Repeats from hour to hour;

Night unto night replying,
Proclaims in every land,
O Lord, with voice undying,
The wonders of thy hand.

The sun with royal splendor
Goes forth to chant thy praise,
And moonbeams soft and tender
Their gentler anthem raise:
O'er every tribe and nation
The music strange is poured;
The song of all creation
To thee, creation's Lord.

All heaven on high rejoices
To do its Maker's will;
The stars with solemn voices
Resound thy praises still:
So let my whole behavior,
Thoughts, words, and actions be,
O Lord, my Strength, my Saviour,
One ceaseless song to thee.

—THOMAS R. BIRKS

LITANY OF THANKSGIVING:

Leader: For the beauty and loveliness of the world which thou hast created,

Group: We give thee thanks, O God.

Leader: For thine own majesty and power, and for thy infinite love,

Group: We give thee thanks, O God.

Leader: For the longings and visions which thou hast placed within us, having created us in thy own image,

Group: We give thee thanks, O God.

Leader: For thy bounteous provisions and thy loving care for us, thy children,

Group: We give thee thanks, O God.

Leader: For the marvelous laws of thy universe, which are ever dependable and sure,

Group: We give thee thanks, O God.

Leader: For the great spiritual laws of life, which lead us into noble and worth-while areas of living,

Group: We give thee thanks, O God.

Leader: For thy Holy Word, which gives us knowledge of thee and thy universe, and which teaches us thy will for mankind,

Group: We give thee thanks, O God.

PRAYER AND BENEDICTION:

Eternal God and Father, help us to ponder the great truths which we have heard from thy Word. May they be a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. In the days ahead may we search and study the Scriptures diligently and fill our minds with thy law and thy precepts. Help us to seek above all else the mind and spirit of Jesus Christ, who came as thy supreme revelation.

Now unto him who is able to supply all your needs according to his riches in glory: unto God our Father be glory for ever and ever.
AMEN.

RESPONSE (as duet or quartet): "Hear Our Prayer, O Lord."

Hear our prayer, O Lord;
Hear our prayer, O Lord;
Incline thine ear to us,
And grant us thy peace. AMEN.

The Beauty of God's Universe

(*A Galilean Service*)

SUGGESTIONS TO THE LEADER:

Many youth groups hold at least one vesper service during the summer, on the shore of a lake or the ocean. If the body of water is quiet, those who lead this service may be seated in a boat which is pushed out a few feet from the shore. The rest of the group may be seated on the shore near the water. If desired, the boat may be rowed from another point along the shore at the beginning of the service, so that the opening trumpet notes will be heard in the distance at first and gradually become more distinct. The boat should then be anchored near the audience.

This worship service may be used effectively on the shore of lake or ocean without having the participants in a boat, or it may be used in any outdoor spot.

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Day Is Dying in the West" (played twice by a trumpeter as a solo, or by two trumpeters, who play the soprano and alto parts).

HYMN: "Day Is Dying in the West."

POEM:

Slowly, by thy hand unfurled,
Down around the weary world
Falls the darkness. Oh, how still
Is the working of thy will.

Mighty Maker, ever nigh,
Work in me as silently;
Veil the day's distracting sights,
Show me heaven's eternal lights.

Living worlds to view he brought
In the boundless realms of thought;
High and infinite desires,
Flaming like those upper fires.

Holy truth, eternal right,
Let them break upon my sight,
Let them shine serene and still,
And with light my being fill.

—WILLIAM H. FURNESS

PRAYER:

We pray, our Father, that we may share with others the inspiration which we receive from worshipping thee in this place of beauty. May we constantly, by our words and deeds, pass on loveliness to the lives of others. May we seek thee, not only through the wonders of thy universe, but more especially through Jesus Christ, the highest revelation of thyself to man. We pray in his name. AMEN.

SCRIPTURE:

If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth.

Put on therefore, as God's elect, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving each other, if any man have a complaint against any; even as the Lord forgave you, so also do ye: and above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to the which also ye were called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God. And whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.¹

POEM:

The little cares that fretted me
I lost them yesterday,
Among the fields above the sea,
Among the winds at play,
Among the lowing of the herds,
The rustling of the trees,

Among the singing of the birds,
The humming of the bees.

The foolish fears of what might happen,
I cast them all away
Among the clover-scented grass,
Among the new-mown hay,
Among the husking of the corn,
Where drowsy poppies nod,
Where ill thoughts die and good are born—
Out in the fields with God.²

—ELIZABETH B. BROWNING

HYMN: "This Is My Father's World."

TALK:

LIFE CAN BE LOVELY TOO

Jesus carried on much of his early ministry in the vicinity of the Sea of Galilee. It was on the shore of Galilee that he called Peter, Andrew, James, and John to be his followers. It was along the same lake that he taught great multitudes about the love of God and the abundant life. In Mark's Gospel we read the following account of one occasion when Jesus spoke to a great crowd along the shore of the Sea of Galilee: "And he began again to teach by the sea side: and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land. And he taught them many things."

Christ was a teacher of the out-of-doors. Most of his teaching and preaching ministry was carried on by the Sea of Galilee, in the hills, or along the roadside. He was aware of the beauty of the universe about him and used many references to nature as illustrations for his teaching. He spoke of the lilies of the field, remarking that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. He mentioned the birds of the heavens, the vine and its branches, the fig tree, the grain of mustard seed, the wheat and the tares, the sower who went forth to sow his seed. On many occasions Jesus referred to the shepherd and his sheep.

Although Jesus often spoke of the beauty of nature, the burden of his message was that life can be lovely too. "I am come," he said, "that

you may have life and have it abundantly." Love is at the very center of the life of beauty which he proclaimed. "A new commandment I give unto you," he said, "that ye love one another, as I have loved you." The Master also declared: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

The life of loveliness which Christ inspires us to live is also characterized by inner peace and poise. "Peace I leave with you," Jesus said. "My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

The abundant life which Christ makes possible is a life of joy and good cheer. We discover the note of joy even when Jesus tried to prepare his disciples for his death on Calvary: "And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. . . . In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

Jesus summarized the characteristics of the abundant life at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount:

Blessed are the humble in spirit.

Blessed are they that mourn with and for others.

Blessed are the meek.

Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness.

Blessed are the merciful.

Blessed are the pure in heart.

Blessed are the peacemakers.

Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake.

The apostle Paul also describes the Christian way of life, which, like the universe about us, is full of beauty and loveliness: "Put on therefore, as God's elect, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving each other, if any man have a complaint against any; even as the Lord forgave you, so also do ye: and above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness. . . . Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

God has made the earth a place of loveliness and delight. If we yield ourselves to him and seek his guidance and help, he can make our lives lovely too.

PERIOD OF SILENT PRAYER:

SOLO: "I Would Be True" (sung softly during the period of prayer).

PRAYER POEM:

God, who touchest earth with beauty,
Make me lovely too,
With thy Spirit recreate me,
Make my heart anew.

Like thy springs and running waters,
Make me crystal pure,
Like thy rocks of towering grandeur
Make me strong and sure.

Like thy dancing waves in sunlight,
Make me glad and free,
Like the straightness of the pine trees,
Let me upright be.

Like the arching of the heavens,
Lift my thoughts above,
Turn my dreams to noble action,
Ministries of love.

God, who touchest earth with beauty,
Make me lovely too,
Keep me ever, by thy spirit,
Pure and strong and true.³

—MARY S. EDGAR

PRAYER:

We thank thee, O God, for the beauty and quietness of this evening hour. May our lives be filled with thy peace and with a part of the loveliness of this quiet spot. As the day fades into night, may we be aware of thy nearness and of thy love. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
AMEN.

TAPS (sung by a soloist or by the entire group):

Day is done, gone the sun,
From the lake, from the hills, from the sky,
Safely rest, all is well,
God is nigh.

(The group should remain in silence as the trumpeter repeats the music as an echo. If desired, the boat may be slowly rowed away from the group so that the notes of the trumpet gradually fade away in the distance.)

Come Up Higher

(A Fagot Service)

SUGGESTIONS TO THE LEADER:

A campfire should be prepared and burning brightly before the group assembles. The leader should have his part thoroughly in mind, as it is very difficult to read in flickering campfire light that which is unfamiliar. An announcement should be made before the fagot service requesting that each young person find a small stick which should be taken to the service and held quietly until the leader explains its use.

CALL TO WORSHIP:

I saw the mountains stand
 Silent, wonderful, and grand,
 Looking out across the land
 When the golden light was falling
 On distant dome and spire,
 And I heard a low voice calling,
 "Come up higher. Come up higher,
 From the lowlands and the mire,
 From the mist of earth-desire,
 From the vain pursuit of self,
 From the attitude of self,
 Come up higher. Come up higher."¹

—JAMES G. CLARK

RESPONSE: First stanza of "Dear Lord and Father of Mankind."

PRAYER:

We think of thee as we look out over the green valleys to the mountain peaks. The whole earth seems silent and peaceful. The clouds move off into the unending sky, and our thoughts go with them out

into the bigness of the world. We thank thee for the thrilling, uplifting beauty of the sky and hills. As we watch them, all the low desires go out of our hearts, and we pray that we may be stronger and nobler than we have ever been before. Help us to live a mountaintop life. AMEN.²

OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE:

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth. . . . The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.

Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.³

POEM:

Maker of mountains—
Creator of their beauty and their might,
I lift my small and human heart to Thee,
Fill it, I pray, with something of their might,
Their steadfastness, their high serenity;
Sweep it with canyon winds, and wash it clean
With clear cold water from the eternal snow,
Let these bright torrents purge it, let all mean
Desires and passions leave it—let me go
Back to the lowlands, back to the crowded days,
Poised and sustained, and ready for my part,
Let me go back, schooled in the mountain ways,
Bearing their old vast secrets in my heart.⁴

—GRACE N. CROWELL

NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE:

He took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening. And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias: who appeared in

glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him. And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said. While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud. And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him. And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone.⁵

HYMN: "Living for Jesus," or "O Worship the King."

LEADER:

If we would come up higher into the realm of victorious Christian living, we must have a vision of the Master in all his power and majesty. We must have a mountaintop experience with Jesus Christ, even as did Peter, James, and John on the Mount of Transfiguration.

Many have had a new vision of Christ in the beauty and serenity of the out-of-doors. This quiet spot should provide a mountaintop experience for each one of us. The bright glow of the campfire should remind us of the glory and radiance of the Son of God.

HYMN: "Fairest Lord Jesus."

LEADER:

We need not only a new vision of the one altogether pure and lovely, but also a new desire to become like him. If our vision of Christ is not made practical in everyday living and speaking, it accomplishes little. Our lives, tomorrow and the day following, must be more courageous and unselfish, more noble and pure, because we have had a mountaintop experience with Jesus Christ today.

DUET OR QUARTET: "Have Thine Own Way, Lord," or "Draw Thou My Soul, O Christ."

LEADER:

Our vision of the radiant Christ should send us forth to serve him and mankind for whom he died, more unselfishly and more untiringly than ever before. Peter, inspired as he was by the glory of Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration, exclaimed impulsively: "Master, it is

good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias."

Peter's first thought was to stay indefinitely on the mountaintop, reveling in his new and exalted experience with Christ. But that was not the Master's plan. The following day Jesus led them down the mountainside to minister to the heartaches and problems of men and women. They had to carry their vision of Jesus into the lowlands of everyday living.

We too must take the inspiration and challenge of this campfire experience into our daily contacts and activities. We must serve Christ more eagerly and manifest his spirit in our homes, our church, our school, and in our work and play.

DUET OR QUARTET: "O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee."

LEADER:

The glowing flames of the campfire suggest the bright radiance of Christ and the Christian way of life. Each one of you has chosen a stick which you will add to the fire, thus making it glow even more brightly. The placing of your stick upon the fire will symbolize a step upward in your climb to the heights of Christian discipleship and consecration. When you give yourself in greater allegiance to Jesus Christ, you will cause the light of the gospel to shine with greater luster.

Before you place your sticks upon the fire, each of you should think of one or more steps forward in the Christian life which you earnestly resolve to take. You may resolve to participate in the youth program of the church more wholeheartedly. You may determine to live and speak more courageously for Christ. You may decide, with God's help, to give prayer and Bible reading a more vital place in your life. In these moments of meditation let God suggest to you the resolves which you should make.

Let us quietly form a circle around the campfire, after which we will step to the fire, two at a time, and place our fagots upon it. The couples will remain standing a few moments by the campfire as they bow in silent prayer, asking God to give them strength to carry out the resolves which they have made.

(After the circle has been formed, the leader may indicate which two young people will be the first to throw their sticks upon the fire. It would be helpful to instruct these two beforehand, so that they will remember to remain at the campfire for a few moments of silent prayer before stepping back into the circle.)

SOLO (after all have placed their sticks upon the fire, and as the young people remain in the circle): "Now in the Days of Youth."

Now in the days of youth,
When life flows fresh and free,
Thou Lord of all our hearts and lives,
We give ourselves to thee;
Our fervent gift receive,
And fit us to fulfill,
Through all our days, in all our ways,
Our heavenly Father's will.

Teach us where'er we live,
To act as in thy sight,
And do what thou wouldst have us do
With radiant delight;
Not choosing what is great,
Nor spurning what is small,
But take as from thy hands our tasks,
And glorify them all.

Teach us to love the true,
The beautiful and pure,
And let us not for one short hour
An evil thought endure;
But give us grace to stand
Decided, brave, and strong,
The lovers of all holy things,
The foes of all things wrong.

Spirit of Christ, do thou
Our first bright days inspire -
That we may live the life of love
And loftiest desire;
And be by thee prepared
For larger years to come,
And for the life ineffable
Within the Father's home.⁶

—WALTER J. MATHAMS

PRAYER:

We thank thee, our Father, for the inspiration of this hour. May this be a mountaintop experience for each one of us as here, around this campfire, we rededicate our lives to Jesus Christ. Help us to remember the resolves which we have made, and give us the strength and determination to put them into practice in our daily living. May all of us follow thee onward and upward into the highlands of Christian faith and experience. In the name of Jesus, our Saviour and Guide. AMEN.

RESPONSE (by duet or quartet): "Hear Our Prayer, O Lord."

BENEDICTION:

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer.⁷ AMEN.

CANDLELIGHT WORSHIP PROGRAMS

3 I

Let Your Light Shine

(Consecration Service)

SUGGESTIONS TO THE LEADER:

A tall white candle should be placed in the center of a table, with three white candles of medium height on each side. The first candlelighter lights one of the candles to the right of the center candle; then the second candlelighter lights the corresponding candle to the left of the center candle. They alternate in this way until all six of the medium-size candles are lighted. Each person attending the service should be given a small white candle in cardboard holder, to be used during the latter part of the candlelight service.

PRELUDE: "My Jesus, I Love Thee."

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Thou Light of Ages, Source of living truth,
Shine into every groping, seeking mind;
Let plodding age and pioneering youth
Each day some clearer, brighter pathway find.

Thou Light of Ages, shining forth in Christ,
Whose brightness darkest ages could not dim,
Grant us the spirit which for him sufficed,—
Rekindle here the torch of love for him.¹

—ROLLAND W. SCHLOERB

HYMN: "More Love to Thee, O Christ."

PRAYER:

Rekindle within us the torch of love for thee, O Christ. We earnestly desire to know thee anew as the Light of the world, the one who will illumine our pathway so that we will not walk in darkness. May we

reflect thy beauty and radiance so that our lives may shine as lights for thee. AMEN.

RESPONSE (as a solo):

Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me,
All his wonderful passion and purity;
O thou Spirit divine,
All my nature refine,
Till the beauty of Jesus be seen in me.

—TOM JONES

LEADER:

Light adds beauty to life. It removes darkness, stills our fears, and reminds us of values that are above and beyond the finite. It reminds us of Jesus Christ. Light brings comfort; so does Jesus. Light encourages growth; so does Jesus. Light provides hope; so does Jesus. Light shows us the way to go; so does Jesus.

We light this tall white candle because it is such a beautiful and appropriate symbol of Christ, the Light of the world. (Lights center candle, using safety matches which have been provided for that purpose. Room lights may be dimmed at this time.)

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." He also said, "Ye are the light of the world. . . . Let your light so shine." How can we let our light shine for him? Only when we dedicate all that we are and have to him can we serve as lights in the midst of darkness. Our lives must be touched by the radiance of his glory, if we would shine for him.

FIRST CANDLELIGHTER:

We should dedicate our physical strength to Christ and ask him to use our health and strength to accomplish his work. Only then can he shine through us to reach others who have not yet found the way. As young people we have an abundance of energy and enthusiasm. Our bodies are strong and sturdy, and can accomplish great things for Christ, provided we are willing to use them as he directs. This candle is symbolic of our physical strength, which we desire to dedicate to Christ. (Lights first candle to right of center candle.)

READER:

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which

is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.²

SOLO OR DUET: First stanza of "Give of Your Best to the Master."

SECOND CANDLELIGHTER:

All of us have exactly the same amount of time in each day in which to achieve the things that are worth while. In at least this one respect all of us are equal. But we do not use our time equally well. Christ said that we should let our light shine before men. This means that we are to be loyal followers of Christ during all the hours of the day, using all our time and all our contacts and experiences as opportunities for radiating the spirit of Christ. Let us light this candle as a symbol of our desire to present to God every moment of our time, praying that he will guide us in the use of this precious trust which has been committed to us. (Lights first candle to left of center candle.)

READER:

Look therefore carefully how ye walk, not as unwise, but as wise; redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.³

SOLO OR DUET:

Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to thee;
Take my moments and my days;
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

FIRST CANDLELIGHTER:

This candle represents our thoughts, and we light it as evidence of our earnest desire to have within us the mind of Christ. (Lights second candle to right of center candle.) Let us ask Christ to cleanse our minds of all impurities, to guide our thinking, and to use all our powers of intellect. Our thoughts should be pure and clean, like the white radiance of this glowing candle. Only then can our lives be shining lights that will reflect the glory of the one who is the Light of the world.

READER:

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. . . . Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things

are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, . . . think on these things.⁴

HYMN: "I Would Be True."

SECOND CANDLELIGHTER:

This candle is symbolic of our voice, which, like our other gifts from God, may help us to be a light for him. There are some who, because of a special gift, can sing of their love for Christ. Others can speak for Christ with great eloquence and power. All of us can use our voices to speak a simple word to a friend about our faith in Christ and what it means to us. Let us light this candle as we resolve to dedicate our voices to Christ in order that he may speak through us. (Lights second candle to left of center candle.)

READER:

But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.⁵

SOLO OR DUET: "Lord, Speak to Me, That I May Speak."

FIRST CANDLELIGHTER:

Our material possessions may also help us to shine as lights for Christ. When we give our money for the advancement of Christ's Kingdom, a great miracle of light is performed. Money is transformed into Bibles with their message of light; it is transformed into human messengers who carry the gospel of light to the ends of the earth. And there is this further miracle: the one who gives his money becomes a light for Christ in a hundred different places—from the islands of the seas to remote tribes in mountain fortresses, and throughout the length and breadth of the homeland. This is the miracle of missions, and it is made possible by the dedication of our money to Jesus Christ.

Let us light this candle as a symbol of our material possessions, with the fervent prayer that we may use all our money to the honor of Christ, and that a sacrificial portion of our means will become blazing lights in widely scattered places of the earth. (Lights third candle to right of center candle.)

READER:

Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, . . . and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of

heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. . . . It is more blessed to give than to receive.⁶

SOLO OR DUET:

Take my silver and my gold;
Not a mite would I withhold.
Take my intellect, and use
Every pow'r as thou shalt choose.

—FRANCES R. HAVERGAL

SECOND CANDLELIGHTER:

We do well if we present to Christ our physical strength, our time, our thoughts, our voices, and our material possessions. But above all these he desires our love. We want our lives to shine as lights for Christ. Only the light of love shines with a clear, pure radiance. Let us therefore light this candle as a symbol of our love for Christ, praying as we do so that our love for him may become more perfect and complete. (Lights third candle to left of center candle.)

READER:

If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And if I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing. Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth.⁷

SOLO OR DUET: First stanza of "My Jesus, I Love Thee."

LEADER:

"Ye are the light of the world. . . . Let your light shine." If we are to do this, we must receive our light from the giver of light and life, even Jesus. As we light our candles from the tall white candle representing Christ, let us dedicate anew our lives to him—our strength, our time, our thoughts, our talents, our money, our love, our all. (The pianist may play softly "Just As I Am, Thine Own to Be" as the young people

light their candles from the tall center candle and form a circle around the room.)

SOLO (after the circle has been completed and as the young people hold their lighted candles): "Just As I Am, Thine Own to Be."

CLOSING PRAYER (pianist may continue to play softly):

O Christ, the great Light of the world, kindle into a brighter glow our love for thee and for our fellow men. May we show by our words and deeds in the days ahead that we have rededicated our lives to thee. May we radiate more of thy love and compassion than ever before. May we be clear, pure lights for thee. AMEN.

(The leader may ask the young people to extinguish their candles and to disperse quietly as the pianist continues to play softly.)

I Dare You

(Consecration Service)

SUGGESTIONS TO THE LEADER:

Four tall white candles in candleholders should be placed upon a table at the front of the room. Safety matches should be provided for the first speaker. The other three speakers may light their candles from a candle already burning. Small candles in cardboard holders should be distributed to all the young people as they enter the service.

PRELUDE: "‘Are Ye Able,’ Said the Master."

CALL TO WORSHIP:

To every man there openeth
A Way, and Ways, and a Way,
And the High Soul climbs the High Way,
And the Low Soul gropes the Low,
And in between, on the misty flats,
The rest drift to and fro.
But to every man there openeth
A High Way, and a Low,
And every man decideth
The Way his soul shall go.¹

—JOHN OXENHAM

HYMN: "Rise Up, O Men of God," or "Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus."

SCRIPTURE:

The challenging words of the aged Apostle to a young man:

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of

love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God. . . . Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

"Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. . . . Fight the good fight of faith." ²

HYMN: "Fight the Good Fight."

LEADER:

The apostle Paul in the closing years of his life challenged the young man Timothy to attempt great things for God. "Let no man despise thy youth," he said to Timothy. "Fight the good fight of faith. Suffer hardship, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus."

That's good advice for young people today. Youth can accomplish great things for God in our own day, as they have through the centuries. But in order to do so, they must have a spirit of faith and daring and high adventure. When young people lose that spirit, they have lost the highest assets and noblest characteristics of youth.

In our day there is such an urgent demand for ease and security that young people are in danger of losing their spirit of daring and their visions of great accomplishment. If that happens, we are lost as a nation. For our country was built on a courageous faith in God and man and on man's ability, with divine help, to greatly dare and nobly live. America is America solely because of men who have dared to suffer hardship like good soldiers of Christ Jesus. America's greatest need in our day is young men and women who have the courage to "fight the good fight of faith."

SOLO OR DUET: "Dare to Be Brave, Dare to Be True."

LEADER:

Because young people need to recapture the spirit of daring, I challenge you to accept four dares—dares which are like great beacon lights that will lead you into a life of great purpose, high adventure, and noble endeavor.

TALK I:

THE PHYSICAL DARE

I DARE YOU to develop a strong body!

At first thought it may seem that the care and development of the

body are unrelated to high vision and a spirit of daring. But think for a moment. How much hardship can we endure in the fight for righteousness if our bodies are frail and weak? How much concentrated effort and expenditure of energy can we give to the cause of Christ if our bodies are weakened by dissipation and are lacking in stamina?

Many a young man has felt the call to a life of daring as a missionary but has been unable to fulfill his vision, simply because his body couldn't take it. Many other young people are failing to carry out their dreams and aspirations because their dissipated bodies haven't the strength and energy for great accomplishment.

The writer of Hebrews warns us to lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race that is set before us. Life is like a race. Let us not break the rules of the race, but remember that consistent training and stern discipline are necessary if we are to come out in front. Smoking, drinking, intemperate eating, and other indulgences will disqualify us for the highest endeavor and noblest satisfactions of life.

"Know ye not," asks the apostle Paul, "that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? and ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body."

This candle is symbolic of the dare to develop a strong body. (Lights one of the tall candles.) I dare you to be strong physically!

TALK II:

THE MENTAL DARE

I DARE you to develop a creative mind!

What are we as young people putting into our minds? Cheap stories? Second-rate movies? Gossip and idle talk? As Christian young people we should be saturating our minds with biographies of great thinkers and leaders, stories of adventure and achievement, great symphonies and oratorios, and the inspiration of God's Word.

Great minds have been developed by the earnest study and contemplation of one book—the Bible. "If ye continue in my word," Jesus said, "then are ye my disciples indeed. And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." The freedom of our nation is based on the truth of Christ, as revealed in God's Word. We must fill our minds with the Word of God if we are to remain a free people.

Psychologists say that nine tenths of the potential of the human mind is undeveloped. Think of the wasted talent and creative genius! Young people often fail to develop their natural inclinations and abilities, and they have hidden potentialities which they do not even dream of. Too often they are content to be entertained by cheap movies and "soap operas," instead of using their originality and ingenuity in the development of hobbies and talents that might bring great beauty and blessing to mankind.

What is needed to spur modern youth to greater effort and endeavor? You say there are no frontiers? No new worlds to conquer? Think once again. Mankind is desperately waiting for the scientist who will discover the secret of the cure for cancer, heart disease, poliomyelitis and a host of virus infections. Will you be that scientist? Or one of hundreds who will help unlock these secrets? The world is frantically waiting for the statesman who has enough vision and daring to lead the nations into the path of peace, away from the brink of atomic war. Will you, with God's help, be that man? Or one of hundreds who can be used of God to save the world from disaster and destruction?

William Carey, the missionary-statesman of India, was first a shoe cobbler. But he developed his mind while he repaired shoes, and he became one of the greatest linguists and scholars of his day, making or editing thirty-six translations of the Bible into the languages and dialects of India.

Dwight L. Moody, unlettered and unlearned, said, "The world has yet to see what God will do with and for and through and by the man who is fully and wholly consecrated to him. With God's help I will be that man!" And Moody dared to develop his mind and his soul, and, through God's help, became one of the greatest men of his generation.

This candle is a symbol of the dare to develop a creative mind. (Lights one of candles.) I dare you to be alert mentally!

TALK III:

THE SOCIAL DARE

I DARE you to develop an unselfish personality!

The development of complexes and neuroses has become a national habit. It is time that we concentrate, not so much on the abnormal personalities in our midst, as on the qualities that make up a normal, happy personality.

We should begin by getting the center of our attention and interest away from ourselves. That was Jesus' philosophy. "Find your life," he

said, "by losing it in service for others." Developing a genuine interest in other people and expressing that interest in our speaking, our attitudes, and our actions are necessary if we are to offset self-centeredness, the basis of most of our personality ailments. Unselfishness is more than dabbling in a few social service projects; it is a way of life. In fact, it is *the* way of life, the only way to find true meaning and purpose in living.

Too many young people have the idea that people are born with or without a good personality. They look enviously at the boy or the girl who just seems to "have what it takes." There are certain hereditary characteristics which have a bearing on personality. And there are certain environmental factors which help or hinder our personality development. But *personal choice* is still the most potent aspect of a normal individual's development. The attitudes that we have toward God, toward other people, and toward life in general are far more important than the type of house we live in, the social position of our parents, or the color of our hair. Someone has said, paraphrasing the familiar verse in First Corinthians, "And now abideth heredity, environment, and personal choice, and the greatest of these is personal choice!"

I dare you, then, to develop an unselfish personality! (Lights one of the candles.) This light is an appropriate symbol of a radiant, Christ-centered youth.

TALK IV:

THE SPIRITUAL DARE

I DARE YOU to develop a growing spiritual life!

A healthy spiritual life, based upon a vital faith in God as he is revealed in Christ, is the foundation of all of life and the key to purposeful, abundant living. Of what advantage is a strong body if one's strength and energy are not dedicated to the service of God and man? Of what value is a brilliant mind if one worships the intellect rather than the God who created us and gave us the power to think? Of what value is a glamorous personality if, because of it, one becomes a selfish snob?

True knowledge and understanding of the universe are impossible apart from the Christian philosophy of life. A truly radiant personality which wins friends and influences people aright is an impossibility without allegiance to the principles of unselfishness and good will as taught by Jesus of Nazareth.

Not only do we need a knowledge of Christian standards and principles, but we also stand in need of the motivation and incentive to translate these ideas into action. It is at this point that the Christian religion is unique. Other religions have proclaimed a degree of idealism and lofty sentiment, but Christianity provides not only the supreme standard, but the power to enable an individual to live according to that standard. Of course many so-called Christians fail to take advantage of the resources available to them. But the power is there, as indicated by the fact that millions of Christian believers through the centuries have discovered it and demonstrated it by the rare quality of their lives.

We receive divine strength and guidance when we earnestly pray and seek God's will, when we meditate upon God's Word, when we sit in silence, allowing God to make his will known to us. Back of our prayers and meditation must be a steadfast faith in Jesus Christ, the supreme revelation of God—a faith that involves not just our emotions, but our will and intellect as well. When we turn all our faculties over to the leadership and direction of Christ, we discover the abundant, victorious life.

This remaining candle represents the dare to develop a growing spiritual life. (Lights candle.) I dare you to be strong spiritually!

LEADER:

We have heard these four dares. What are we going to do about them? Do we have the courage to accept them and, with God's help, achieve a more worth-while life of daring and service?

If you will accept these four dares, if you will ask Christ's help in making them realities in your life, will you light your candle from all four of these candles, which symbolize the four aspects of a well-rounded life? I dare you to develop a strong body, a creative mind, an unselfish personality, and a growing spiritual life! (The young people light their candles and form a circle about the room.)

PRAYER:

By these lighted candles, our Father, we are saying to one another and to thee that we have accepted a fourfold challenge. We pray for the daring and determination to carry out the resolves we have made this night. Kindle within us the courage to attempt great things for thee. May we be willing to "fight the good fight of faith" and to "endure

hardship like a good soldier of Christ Jesus." In his name we pray.
AMEN.

RESPONSE (as a solo or by entire group): First stanza of "‘Are Ye Able,’
Said the Master."

BENEDICTION:

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God,
be honour and glory for ever and ever. AMEN.³

33

Workers with God

(Installation Service)

SUGGESTIONS TO THE LEADER:

A simple worship center should be arranged with one tall white candle in the center. The candle should be lit before the beginning of the service. The young people reading the parts of the three voices and the soloist should be hidden from the view of the audience. Make sure that they speak and sing distinctly, so that they will be easily heard.

The officers to be installed should be carefully instructed beforehand regarding the positions which they are to take behind the table, the lighting of their candles, and the procedure to be followed during the remainder of the service. Each officer should be provided with a white candle of medium height.

PRELUDE: "Take Time to Be Holy."

CALL TO WORSHIP:

O Master Workman of the race,
Thou Man of Galilee,
Who with the eyes of early youth
Eternal things did see:
We thank thee for thy boyhood faith
That shone thy whole life through;
"Did ye not know it is my work
My Father's work to do?"

O Carpenter of Nazareth,
Builder of life divine,
Who shapest man to God's own law,
Thyself the fair design,
Build us a tower of Christ-like height,
That we the land may view,

And see, like thee, our noblest work
Our Father's work to do.

O Thou who dost the vision send
And givest each his task,
And with the task sufficient strength:
Show us thy will, we ask;
Give us a conscience bold and good;
Give us a purpose true,
That it may be our highest joy,
Our Father's work to do.¹

—JAY T. STOCKING

HYMN: "Go, Labor On!" or "Saviour, Thy Dying Love."

SCRIPTURE:

I planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: but each shall receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we are God's fellow-workers: ye are God's husbandry, God's building.

According to the grace of God which was given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder I laid a foundation; and another buildeth thereon. But let each man take heed how he buildeth thereon. For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.²

PRAYER:

We thank thee, O God, for the privilege of being colaborers with thee. May our work for thee be of enduring worth, because it is built on a faith in Jesus Christ—the only true foundation. In his name we pray. AMEN.

(At this point in the service the room lights may be turned off.)

First Voice: Jesus had little to say about leaders and leadership; he had much to say about followers and servants.

Second Voice: "Follow me," he said, "and I will make you fishers of men."

Third Voice: "He that is greatest among you shall be your servant."

First Voice: Jesus himself is the supreme example of unselfish service.

Second Voice: "I am in the midst of you," he said, "as he that serveth."

Third Voice: "Even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

Solo: First stanza of "O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee."

First Voice: The Scriptures recognize that followers of the Master are called to different tasks.

Second Voice: "I planted," Paul said. "Apollos watered; but God gave the increase."

Third Voice: We are God's fellow workers—colaborers with him.

First Voice: Whatever our specific tasks as workers with God, the Scriptures suggest the spirit in which all of us should do our work for God.

Second Voice: "Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing."

Third Voice: "Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful"—not brilliant, or talented, or clever—*but faithful.*

First Voice: Jesus said, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; even as I have loved you."

Second Voice: "And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three, but the greatest of these is love."

Third Voice: "Love never faileth."

Solo: First stanza of "More Love to Thee, O Christ."

First Voice: If you would nobly serve, you must remember your constant need of divine help and guidance.

Second Voice: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

Third Voice:

Lord, what a change within us one short hour
Spent in thy presence will avail to make!
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take!
What parched grounds refresh as with a shower!
We kneel, and all around us seems to lower;
We rise, and all, the distant and the near,
Stands forth in sunny outline brave and clear;
We kneel, how weak! we rise, how full of power! ³

—RICHARD C. TRENCH

First Voice: Those of you who have been entrusted with special ministries for Christ have a double responsibility to serve unselfishly.

Second Voice: The apostle Paul said, "Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. . . . Take heed unto thyself."

Third Voice: "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all that ye do be done in love."

First Voice: "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required."

Second Voice: "And to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more."

Third Voice: "Therefore . . . be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

Solo: First stanza of "Work for the Night Is Coming."

First Voice: Think not solely in terms of your own small group. All who earnestly seek to do his will are workers with God—men of every race, color, and nation.

Second Voice: As a true servant of the living God, have a vision that encompasses the globe. Think of yourself as a part of a vast army of workers with God throughout the whole wide earth.

Third Voice:

O brother man, fold to thy heart thy brother;
Where pity dwells, the peace of God is there;
To worship rightly is to love each other,
Each smile a hymn, each kindly deed a prayer.

For he whom Jesus loved has truly spoken:
The holier worship which he deigns to bless
Restores the lost, and binds the spirit broken,
And feeds the widow and the fatherless.

—JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

First Voice: The new officers of our group are workers with God in a very special way, for we have chosen them to guide, inspire, and encourage us in our service for the Master. These new officers may take their places near

the candle, which represents the spirit of the living Christ. (Gives the names of the officers and the positions to which they have been elected. The officers then take their places behind the table, half on one side of the tall candle, half on the other side, facing the audience.)

Second Voice: As you light your candles from the pure white candle, may it be the earnest purpose of your hearts to radiate the spirit of Christ and to perform faithfully the tasks that have been entrusted to you. (The officers light their candles from the tall candle on the table and remain standing, holding their lighted candles.)

Third Voice:

His lamps are we
To shine where he shall say;
And lamps are not for sunny rooms,
Nor for the light of day,
But for dark places of the earth
Where shame and wrong and crime have birth;
Or for the murky twilight gray,
Where wandering sheep have gone astray;
Or where the light of faith grows dim,
And souls are groping after him;
And as sometimes a flame we find,
Clear shining through the night—
So bright we do not see the lamp,
But only see the light,
So we may shine—his light the flame,
That men may glorify his name.

—AUTHOR UNKNOWN

First Voice: These officers whom we have chosen cannot do their task alone. All of us are workers with God, and we must work together unitedly to hasten the day when his will is done on earth as it is in heaven.

Second Voice: Let us, both officers and members, dedicate our lives to work diligently for the advancement of Christ's Kingdom, as we pray the prayer our Lord taught his disciples.

THE LORD'S PRAYER (in unison):

Third Voice: Show us, our Father, how we can be better followers and servants of thine. We pray that these new officers may receive guidance and wisdom from thee, and that all of us may serve thee more faithfully and effectively. Have thine own way in the lives of us all. AMEN.

First Voice: May we sing softly the first and last stanzas of "Have Thine Own Way, Lord," and as our new officers hold aloft their lighted candles, may we follow them quietly from the room.

HYMN: Stanzas 1 and 4 of "Have Thine Own Way, Lord."

(The pianist may continue playing as the officers lead the other young people from the room. The candles should be extinguished immediately after the young people have left.)

34

We Will Follow Thee

(Installation Service)

SUGGESTIONS TO THE LEADER:

A tall white candle, with four white candles of medium height on each side, should be arranged on a table at the front of the room. The leader and candlelighter should stand behind the table, while the new officers may stand—half at one end of the table and half at the other end. The table should be placed far enough from the wall so that the young people may form a complete circle around the room at the conclusion of the service.

PRELUDE: "He Leadeth Me."

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Come, sound his praise abroad,
And hymns of glory sing;
Jehovah is the sovereign God,
The universal King.

Come, worship at his throne,
Come, bow before the Lord:
We are his works and not our own;
He formed us by his word.

Today attend his voice,
Nor dare provoke his rod;
Come, like the people of his choice,
And own your gracious God.

—ISAAC WATTS

DOXOLOGY:

HYMN: "Now in the Days of Youth," or "True-hearted, Whole-hearted."

LEADER:

Various members of our group have been chosen to lead us in the task of building the Kingdom of God. As they accept the places of leadership to which they have been selected, it becomes their privilege and responsibility to lead the youth of our church into experiences which will enrich their lives and advance the Master's cause. In their task of leadership they will be followers too—followers of the Christ of Galilee.

PRAYER:

It is the earnest desire of all of us, both officers and members of this group, to follow thee, O Christ. Forgive us for the times when we have given thee second place in our lives. Forgive us for spending our time, money, and energy on things that are trivial and secondary. During the days ahead may we be more Christlike in our daily living and more faithful in performing the tasks in thy Kingdom which have been entrusted to us. In thy name we pray. AMEN.

HYMN: "He Leadeth Me," or "Take My Life, and Let It Be."

LEADER:

Christ is the supreme standard of life. He is our example and guide. He is also our Saviour, who forgives our sins, and our source of strength and power to overcome temptation. Let us light this candle as a symbol of the light and beauty of his life. (Lights tall center candle.)

The newly elected officers may take their places on both sides of the lighted candle. (The leader may read the names of the officers and the positions to which they have been elected. The officers then take their places at the front of the room.)

We know that as you lead our group during the year ahead, you in turn desire to be led of Christ. You desire to follow in the footsteps of the Master and to live according to the standards which he has set up. A summary of Christ's teachings about life is found in the Beatitudes. Harken as the candlelighter suggests to us the message of the Beatitudes. (The room lights should be turned off at this point. The leader may be seated during the lighting of the candles.)

CANDLELIGHTER (enters carrying a tall lighted candle and stands behind the table):

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven."
Blessed are you, as new officers of this group, if you feel your need of

divine help and guidance. May you kindle in your hearts the light of humility as you enter this new year of service for Christ. (Lights one of candles of medium height.)

"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." A Christian does not indulge in self-pity, but is concerned about the problems and sorrows of others. May you kindle in your hearts the light of sympathy. (Lights second candle.)

"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." A Christian leader is kind and unselfish, desiring nothing for himself except an opportunity to serve. May your lives radiate the light of meekness. (Lights third candle.)

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." May you dedicate yourselves to new growth in the Christian life, to increased hunger and thirst after righteousness. (Lights fourth candle.)

"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." A Christian has a heart of compassion, is always helpful and considerate of others. May you kindle anew in your hearts the light of mercy. (Lights fifth candle.)

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." A true Christian leader has one dominant goal or purpose in life—to honor and serve Christ by every word, thought, and deed. May you kindle in your lives the light of purity. (Lights sixth candle.)

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." May the inner peace of God flood your lives with new warmth and power, and may you share this peace with others during this new year of service for Christ. May you kindle in your hearts the light of peace. (Lights seventh candle.)

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." A true follower of the Master is willing to suffer scorn and persecution, if need be, for the sake of Christ. May your lives reveal the light of sacrifice during the days ahead. (Lights eighth candle. Candlelighter exits.)

SOLO: "I Bind My Heart This Tide," or "Beneath the Cross of Jesus."

LEADER:

Not only these officers but all of us should determine anew to live according to these exalted standards which Christ has given us. Let all of us dedicate our lives to greater humility, sympathy, meekness, mercy, purity, peace, and sacrifice. Let us commit ourselves to a more

complete and steadfast loyalty to Christ and to greater earnestness and enthusiasm in our work for him during this new year.

The members of our youth fellowship may stand and join with these new officers in a litany of dedication. If we can do so with sincerity, let us respond to each commitment with the words "We will follow thee, O Christ."

LITANY OF DEDICATION:

Leader: With a greater loyalty and devotion to thee and to the work of thy Kingdom—

Group: We will follow thee, O Christ.

Leader: Into new paths of service and usefulness and with a spirit of earnest endeavor—

Group: We will follow thee, O Christ.

Leader: With a new hunger and thirst after the things of the spirit, which are vital and eternal—

Group: We will follow thee, O Christ.

Leader: With a greater faithfulness to thy church and to our individual tasks in the ministry of the church—

Group: We will follow thee, O Christ.

Leader: With a more united spirit of comradeship within our own group—

Group: We will follow thee, O Christ.

Leader: Into paths of greater co-operation and fellowship with other groups of Christians—

Group: We will follow thee, O Christ.

Leader: With more earnest effort to manifest thy standards of love, mercy, humility, purity, and sacrifice in our daily living—

Group: We will follow thee, O Christ.

LEADER:

When we unite our hands, hearts, and energies with our fellow Christians in a spirit of love and helpfulness, we can accomplish significant tasks for our Lord and Master. Let us, both officers and members, join hands, forming a complete circle of friendship about the room, with the lights of humility, sympathy, meekness, Christian growth, mercy, purity, peace, and sacrifice shining in our midst.

LEADER (after the circle has been formed):

This united circle symbolizes the loyal support and co-operation which the members of our group will give to our new officers. It is

also a symbol of the spirit of comradeship and fellowship which permeates our entire group. Following the prayer we will sing the first stanza of that great hymn of fellowship, "Blest Be the Tie That Binds."

PRAYER:

We thank thee, O God, for the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love. We are united in our desire to be more loyal followers of the Master and to serve him more diligently and eagerly. We pray with great earnestness for the new officers of our group. Grant unto them this day a new sense of thy nearness and of thy guidance and power. Give all of us the courage during the months ahead to trust thee more implicitly and to follow thy leading into new paths of daring and significant service for thee. In the name of Christ, who prayed that we all might be one in him. AMEN.

RESPONSE: First stanza of "Blest Be the Tie That Binds."

BENEDICTION:

May we experience the joy of true fellowship with each other and with thee through all the days ahead. AMEN.

Forward with Christ

(International Candlelight Service)

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE LEADER:

This is the most elaborate of the candlelight services, and consequently will be for many the most impressive and beautiful. If the details are worked out carefully, the service will not be difficult to present.

A long table—seven young people should be able to stand behind it—and the following white candles will be needed for the service: 1 eighteen-inch candle, 12 twelve-inch candles, 12 six-inch candles, and sufficient small candles for the audience. The eighteen-inch candle, with 3 twelve-inch candles on each side, should be arranged in candleholders on the table. Two six-inch candles should be placed in front of each of the twelve-inch candles.

Each candlelighter will carry an unlighted twelve-inch candle which he will light at the tall center candle and then use to illuminate the candles for which he is responsible. Each candlelighter will remain behind the candles he has lit, holding his own lighted candle.

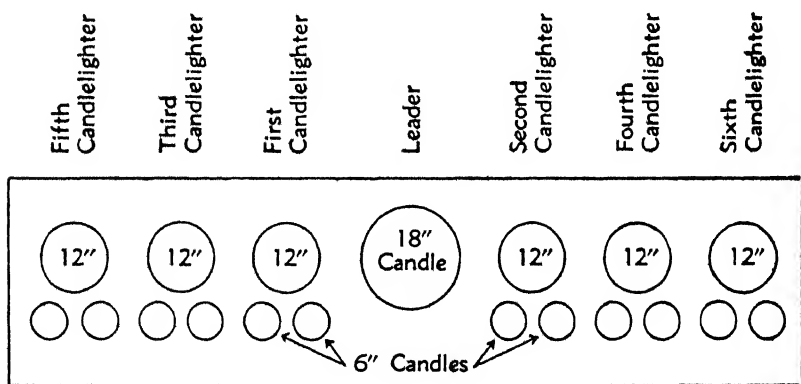


DIAGRAM SHOWING ARRANGEMENTS FOR THIS SERVICE

Each person attending the service should be given a small candle in a cardboard holder as he enters the room. The tall center candle should be burning when the service begins.

PRELUDE: "Follow the Gleam" (violin and piano).

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Light of the world, we hail thee,
Flushing the eastern skies;
Never shall darkness veil thee
Again from human eyes;
Too long, alas withholden,
Now spread from shore to shore;
Thy light, so glad and golden,
Shall set on earth no more.

Light of the world, illumine
This darkened earth of thine,
Till everything that's human
Be filled with the divine;
Till every tongue and nation,
From sin's dominion free,
Rise in the new creation
Which springs from love and Thee.

—JOHN S. B. MONSELL

HYMN: "We've a Story to Tell to the Nations."
(Room lights may be dimmed after the hymn.)

LEADER:

This tall white candle aglow with light is a symbol of the Lord Jesus, who said, "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me may not abide in the darkness." Christ has challenged youth through the centuries to follow the light of his gospel and to press forward with him.

DUET OR QUARTET: "Forward Through the Ages" (tune: "St. Gertrude").

Forward through the ages
In unbroken line,
Move the faithful spirits
At the call divine;

Gifts in differing measures,
Hearts of one accord,
Manifold the service,
One the sure reward.

Forward through the ages
In unbroken line,
Move the faithful spirits
At the call divine.

LEADER:

The first followers of the Master were aware of their responsibility as light bearers. When their lives were illumined by the light of Christ, they immediately passed on the light to the ones next to them. Andrew, after hearing Jesus speak, found first his own brother, Simon Peter, and brought him to Christ. The light of the gospel spread from one to another until there were 120 disciples gathered together on the Day of Pentecost. The number was increased to more than 3,000 before the day was over, for Peter, one of the most courageous heralds of the light, preached with power on that historic day.

Soon after Pentecost, according to the Scriptures, the number grew to more than 5,000. From that point the message of light spread so rapidly that no further figures are given. These early followers of the Master were subjected to severe persecution. This only served to scatter the flames, and the light of faith immediately sprang up in a hundred different places.

FIRST CANDLELIGHTER:

I represent the first-century Christians, those first followers of the Master who accepted the challenge to go forward with him. The twelve disciples were the first light bearers, having received the torch directly from Christ, and I light this candle in honor of them. (Lights first twelve-inch candle to right of center candle.) The disciples carried the light to many others who in turn became messengers of light. (Lights the 2 six-inch candles in front of the twelve-inch candle and remains standing to right of leader.)

LEADER:

One of the most bitter persecutors of the early Christians was Saul of Tarsus. As the result of a transforming experience with Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus, Saul the persecutor became Paul the preacher,

who altered the course of history by proclaiming the light of Christ to the Gentiles.

SECOND CANDLELIGHTER:

I represent the Christians of Europe, to whom the gospel was carried by the apostle Paul and other torchbearers of the Master. How thankful we are for those early Christians who dared to go forward with Christ and carry his message to strange lands and strange peoples. We are grateful that Paul answered the call to "come over into Macedonia and help us," thus bringing the good news of salvation to the continent of Europe. I light this candle in honor of Paul, the great apostle of light. (Lights first twelve-inch candle to left of center candle.) These smaller lights represent the first people of Europe to whom Paul brought the message of life. (Lights the 2 six-inch candles in front of the twelve-inch candle and remains standing to the left of leader.)

LEADER:

The history of Christianity has been one great forward movement after another. The torch of Christ has been carried from city to city, from nation to nation, from continent to continent. The Christian message spread from the continent of Europe to the British Isles, and as a result a great new chapter in the history of the world was written.

THIRD CANDLELIGHTER:

I represent the people of the British Isles, to whom the message of light was brought from the continent of Europe. We too are grateful for those who were unselfish with the gospel, and who obeyed the command of Christ to press forward with him and carry his message to other peoples and other lands.

This candle and the smaller ones near it symbolize the first Christians of Scotland, Ireland, and England. (Lights second twelve-inch candle to right of center candle and the 2 six-inch candles in front of it. Remains standing to right of leader.)

LEADER:

The next great forward movement of the gospel takes an ocean in its stride, and we see the Pilgrims and other daring crusaders of the light go forward with Christ to the New World.

FOURTH CANDLELIGHTER:

I represent the people of America, who received the torch of Christ from Europe; and I light this candle in honor of the Pilgrims who

came to these shores with an earnest desire to worship God according to the dictates of conscience. (Lights second twelve-inch candle to left of center candle.)

These smaller candles represent the Puritans, Baptists, Quakers, and other groups of courageous Christians who also brought the light of the gospel to the New World. (Lights the 2 six-inch candles and remains standing to left of leader.)

LEADER:

With the light in so many lands these early soldiers of the Cross might have been content, but they remembered the words of the Master: "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring." In order to carry the light to those that were still in darkness the great missionary movement of the nineteenth century was born. The gospel, knowing no bounds or limitations, spanned a second ocean as William Carey of England took the good news to India. Adoniram Judson soon followed in this noble succession of trail blazers and became the first messenger of light from America to cross the Pacific. Others followed in rapid order—many to an early death due to privation and disease, others to a martyr's crown, and all of them doing their part to carry forward the Cross of Christ to new frontiers.

FIFTH CANDLELIGHTER:

As a representative of the people of the Orient who have received the light of Christ during the missionary movement of the past two centuries, I light this candle in honor of Carey and Judson, the first light bearers to the Orient. (Lights third twelve-inch candle to right of leader.) These smaller candles represent the hundreds of other missionaries who have given their lives for the furtherance of the gospel in the Orient. (Lights 2 small candles and remains standing to the right of leader.)

LEADER:

Messengers of the Cross have also carried the light of Christ to the heart of Africa, to the remote islands of the sea, and to other far-flung outposts of the world. The story of their undaunted courage and valiant faith comprises one of the most thrilling chapters in the onward march of Christianity through the centuries.

SIXTH CANDLELIGHTER:

I represent the tens of thousands from the heart of Africa and from the islands of the sea who have received the message of salvation because brave heralds of the Cross have dared to take the torch of Christ to the remote regions of the earth. These candles symbolize the light of faith that has been brought to us by these men and women of high vision and courage. (Lights third twelve-inch candle and the 2 remaining small candles to left of reader.)

DUET OR QUARTET: "Forward Through the Ages."

Wider grows the kingdom,
Reign of love and light;
For it we must labor
Till our faith is sight;
Prophets have proclaimed it,
Martyrs testified,
Poets sung its glory,
Heroes for it died.

Forward through the ages
In unbroken line,
Move the faithful spirits
At the call divine.

LEADER:

We do not want the great forward movement of the gospel to stop with us. There are millions who still sit in darkness and the shadow of death. Christ calls youth today as he has through the centuries: Whom shall I send? Who will go for me? And youth are answering the challenge as they have through ages past: Here am I, Lord. Send me!

God may be calling some of us to carry his message of love to distant places. He is challenging the rest of us to make it possible for his representatives to go to the far corners of the earth. They cannot carry forward the banner of Christ without our prayers, our gifts, our interest, and our concern. God is also commissioning all of us to share our Christian faith with those about us. Young people all around us are in desperate need of the guidance and peace and power of Christ. Will we withhold the good news from them? The torch of Christ has been

carried forward through the centuries as each individual Christian shares his light of faith with those about him.

DUET OR QUARTET: "Forward Through the Ages."

Not alone we conquer,
Not alone we fall;
In each loss or triumph
Lose or triumph all.
Bound by God's fair purpose
In one living whole,
Move we on together
To the shining goal.

Forward through the ages
In unbroken line,
Move the faithful spirits
At the call divine.¹

—FREDERICK L. HOSMER

LEADER:

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee!" Let us light our individual candles from the tall white flame symbolizing Christ and dedicate our lives anew to march forward with him, holding high the torch of the gospel. (The young people light their individual candles from the center candle and with the candlelighters who already hold lighted candles, form a complete circle of light about the room.)

POEM:

Hold high the torch!
You did not light its glow—
'Twas given you by other hands, you know.
I think it started down its pathway bright,
The day the Maker said: "Let there be light."
And he once said, who hung on Calvary's tree—
"Ye are the light of the world." . . . Go! . . . Shine—for me.

—AUTHOR UNKNOWN

VIOLIN AND PIANO: "O Jesus, I Have Promised."

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION (violinist and pianist may continue playing the hymn very softly):

O God, we thank thee for all thy followers who through the centuries have shared thy light with others, so that we who are living today have the privilege of knowing the peace and power of thy gospel. We humbly pray that we may be a part of that great procession of torchbearers. Help us to be lights for thee and to go forward with thee to bring light to the dark places of the earth. In the name of Christ our Saviour. AMEN.

RESPONSE (by entire group): First stanza of "O Jesus, I Have Promised."

BENEDICTION:

May the light of Christ lead you onward and shine through you to others in all the days ahead. AMEN.

(The leader may suggest that the young people put out their candles and disperse quietly as the violinist and pianist continue to play softly the consecration hymn.)

APPENDIX

Notes

PROGRAM 1. THE LAND OF BEGINNING AGAIN

1. From "The Gate of the Year." Used by permission of Christy & Moore, Ltd.
2. Phil. 3:12-14; II Cor. 5:17; Phil. 4:13 (A.S.V.).
3. "The Land of Beginning Again."
4. By Percy R. Hayward.

PROGRAM 2. THE VISION GLORIOUS

1. Eph. 2:13-14, 19-20; 4:1-6; Acts 17:24, 26; Gal. 3:28.
2. By Olga Edith Gunkle. From *Twentieth-Century Heroes* (Board of Education, Methodist Episcopal Church).

PROGRAM 3. A NATION'S STRENGTH

1. II Chron. 7:14; Isa. 40:31.
2. "A Nation's Strength."
3. "God Send Us Men."
4. From a speech given at Edwardsville, Illinois, Sept. 13, 1858.
5. "America First." Used by permission.

PROGRAM 4. ADDING MORE MEANING TO LENT

1. Matt. 16:24-25; 10:38.

PROGRAM 5. DISCOVERING THE KING

1. John 14:6; 8:12; Matt. 11:28-29.

PROGRAM 6. HE IS RISEN

1. Mark 15:12-15.
2. Luke 23:33-38.
3. Matt. 27: 62-66.
4. Mark 16:1-6.
5. "Resurgam."
6. Adapted from H. F. Branch, *Christ's Ministry and Passion in Art*.
7. Rom. 10:9.
8. I Cor. 15:20, 55.

9. Col. 3:1.
10. Phil. 1:27 (A.S.V.).
11. Eph. 4:1 (A.S.V.).
12. Gal. 5:22.

PROGRAM 7. TRUTH WILL RISE AGAIN

1. "The Way, the Truth, the Life."
2. John 8:31-32; 14:5-9; 10:30.
3. John 18:33-38; 19:4-13, 15-16.
4. Adapted from Roy L. Smith, "When Pilate Heard the News," *The Salvation Army War Cry* (Chicago). Used by permission.
5. "Resurgam." Used by permission.
6. Jude 1:24-25.

PROGRAM 8. IT WORKS AT HOME TOO

1. Ps. 95:1-2.
2. *Topic*, Oct.-Dec., 1947. Used by permission.

PROGRAM 9. A PENECONCOST FOR OUR DAY

1. Acts 2:1-8, 12, 14, 22-23, 32-33, 36-38, 41 (A.S.V.).
2. From George W. Wiseman, "Easter Must Be Reclaimed." Used by permission.

PROGRAM 10. OUR NATION UNDER GOD

1. II Chr. 7:14; Prov. 14:34; Ps. 33:12; Matt. 5:3-10.

PROGRAM 11. THE TIE THAT BINDS

1. Luke 2:4-7; Matt. 4:18-22; 26:26-28, 36-41; Luke 23:33-38; Matt. 28:1-8, 18-20.
2. "Korean Creed" from the *Book of Worship for Church and Home*. Used by permission of The Methodist Publishing House.

PROGRAM 12. THEY CONQUER WITHOUT ARMS

1. Mic. 4:2-3; Matt. 5:38-44.
2. "Prayer for Peace." Used by permission.
3. "Hymn of Peace." Used by permission.
4. From *The Children's Story Garden*, compiled by a Committee of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends, Anna Pettit Broomell, chairman. Copyright 1920, 1948, by Anna Pettit Broomell. Used by permission of J. B. Lippincott Co.

PROGRAM 13. LET US GIVE THANKS

1. Used by permission.
2. Pss. 92:1; 95:1-6; 100.
3. From "Hymn of Joy." Used by permission Charles Scribner's Sons, publisher.
4. Adapted in part from Charles Arthur Boyd, *Stories of Hymns for Creative Living*. Used by permission.

PROGRAM 14. THE BIBLE MAKES A DIFFERENCE

1. Ps. 119:11-12, 15-16, 33-34, 105, 18.
2. Adapted from Clarence W. Hall, "Shosei Kina Tends the Lamp," *Christian Herald*, Oct., 1945. Used by permission.

PROGRAM 15. THE LIGHTS OF CHRISTMAS

1. "Day Dawn of the Heart."
2. John 1:1-5 (Weymouth).
3. Luke 2:8-11.
4. Luke 2:13-14.
5. Matt. 2:1-2, 9-11.
6. Matt. 5:14-16.
7. "Light of the World." From *Christmas*. Copyright 1941 by Augsburg Publishing House. Used by permission.

PROGRAM 16. SEEK YE THE KING

1. Isa. 55:6-7.
2. Matt. 2:1-12.
3. "Wise Men Seeking Jesus." Used by permission the Methodist Publishing House, London.
4. Adapted from the story by Henry van Dyke. Used by permission Harper & Bros.

PROGRAM 17. CHRIST'S CALL TO YOUTH

1. Used by permission.
2. Matt. 16:24-25; 6:24, 31-33; 4:18-20.
3. II Thess. 2:16-17.

PROGRAM 18. DYNAMIC DISCIPLESHIP

1. Used by permission.
2. Phil. 4:4-9, 13 (A. S. V.)
3. From the *Baptist Youth Fellowship Convocation Notebook*. Used by permission of the Baptist Youth Fellowship.
4. Eph. 3:20-21.

PROGRAM 19. REACHING YOUTH FOR CHRIST

1. "Send Me."
2. Isa. 6:1, 5-8; Acts 9:1-6, 19-20 (A.S.V.); Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8 (A.S.V.).
3. From *Topic*, Jan.-March, 1948. Used by permission.
4. Ps. 90:17.

PROGRAM 20. WHY I BELIEVE IN THE CHURCH

1. Ps. 100:1-2, 4.
2. Pss. 84:1-2, 4, 10; 122:1.
3. Matt. 16:16-18; Eph. 5:25-27.
4. "The Charter of Salvation." Used by permission.
5. From the *American Mercury* as condensed in the *Reader's Digest*, Jan., 1941. Used by permission.
6. Reprinted from March, 1946, *Coronet*. Copyright 1946 by Esquire, Inc.
7. Used by permission.
8. Eph. 3:20-21.

PROGRAM 21. I WILL NOT DRIFT

1. Phil. 3:13-14; Rom. 12:1-2.
2. From the *Western Recorder*. Used by permission.
3. Baptist Youth Fellowship Life Service Pledge. Used by permission of the Baptist Youth Fellowship.

PROGRAM 22. NOW MORE THAN EVER

1. From *The Church and the Hour*. Used by permission of E. P. Dutton & Co., publishers.
2. Francis of Assisi.
3. John 20; 21; Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8.
4. Rom. 3:10-11, 15, 18, 23.
5. I John 4:16, 19; John 3:16.
6. Matt. 20:26-28.
7. From "Japan Open to Christianity," *Christian Century*, April 20, 1949. Used by permission.
8. Heb. 13:20-21.

PROGRAM 23. THEY FOUND THE CHURCH THERE

1. From the *Saturday Evening Post*, as condensed in the *Reader's Digest*, July, 1945. Used by permission.

2. Luke 3:3-6 (Montgomery).
3. Adapted from Henry P. Van Dusen, *They Found the Church There*. Used by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons, publishers.
4. Rev. 7:9-10, 13-14 (A.S.V.).
5. Used by permission.
6. From "They Made a Christian of Me," *Christian Advocate*, May 31, 1945.
7. Adapted from Van Dusen, *op. cit.*

PROGRAM 24. FOLLOWING THE JESUS ROAD

1. Acts 5:27-32, 40-42 (A.S.V.).
2. Adapted from Coe Hayne, *Kiowa Turning*, copyright 1944 by the Northern Baptist Convention. Used by permission.

PROGRAM 25. THIS IS MY FATHER'S WORLD

1. Ps. 19:1-2 (A.S.V.).
2. Used by permission Charles Scribner's Sons, publishers.
3. Ps. 8:3-9.
4. Used by permission.
5. Phil. 4:4-8 (A.S.V.).
6. Used by permission.

PROGRAM 26. THE MESSAGE OF A TREE

1. "Leading."
2. Ps. 1.
3. "Shade."
4. Matt. 7:16-20; John 15:8; Gal. 5:22-23.
5. "Trees." Used by permission Doubleday & Co., Inc.
6. "Let Me Stand Upon the Hilltop." Used by permission.

PROGRAM 27. THE MESSAGE OF A GARDEN

1. Isa. 40:31; Ps. 46:10.
2. "God's Garden." Used by permission Burns Oates & Washbourne, Ltd., London.
3. Gen. 2:8, 15; Isa. 61:11; John 18:1-2; Matt. 26:37-41.
4. Heb. 13:20-21.

PROGRAM 28. THE BIBLE AND GOD'S UNIVERSE

1. Ps. 117.
2. "Vestigia" from *Bliss Carman's Poems*. Reprinted by permission of Dodd, Mead & Co., Inc.
3. Gen. 1:1-3, 9-10, 14-16; Pss. 24:1-2; 33:6-9.
4. Pss. 19:1-6; 104:1-5, 24, 31.

5. Gen. 1:27-28; 2:7; Ps. 8:3-9.
6. Pss. 104:10-14; 23; Matt. 6:26-33.
7. Gen. 8:22; Job 37:14-16; Ps. 19:7-9 (A.S.V.).
8. Matt. 5:38-39, 43-44; 16:24-25; 22:37-39; John 13:34-35; Gal. 6:7-8.

PROGRAM 29. THE BEAUTY OF GOD'S UNIVERSE

1. Col. 3:1-2, 12-17 (A.S.V.).
2. "Out in the Fields with God."
3. Used by permission.

PROGRAM 30. COME UP HIGHER

1. "Eleventh Day."
2. From *A Boy's Book of Prayers* by Robert Merrill Bartlett. Copyright, The Pilgrim Press. Used by permission.
3. Pss. 121:1-2, 5-8; 24:3-5.
4. Used by permission.
5. Luke 9:28-36.
6. From *The Pilgrim Hymnal*. Copyright, The Pilgrim Press. Used by permission.
7. Ps. 19:14.

PROGRAM 31. LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE

1. Used by permission.
2. Rom. 12:1-2.
3. Eph. 5:15-17 (A.S.V.).
4. Phil. 2:5; 4:8.
5. Matt. 12:36-37.
6. Mal. 3:10; Acts 20:35.
7. I Cor. 13:1-8 (A.S.V.).

PROGRAM 32. I DARE YOU

1. "The Ways." Used by permission of Miss Erica Oxenham.
2. II Tim. 4:7-8; 1:7-8; 2:3; I Tim. 4:12; 6:12.
3. I Tim. 1:17.

PROGRAM 33. WORKERS WITH GOD

1. From *The Pilgrim Hymnal*. Copyright, The Pilgrim Press. Used by permission.
2. I Cor. 3:6-11 (A.S.V.).
3. "Prayer."

PROGRAM 35. FORWARD WITH CHRIST

1. Used by permission the Beacon Press.

Sources for Hymns

CODE: The letter refers to the hymnal, and the number to the hymn in the hymnal.

- A . . . Abingdon Song Book (Methodist)
 B . . . New Baptist Hymnal (Southern Baptist Convention)
 C . . . Hymns for Creative Living (Northern Baptist Convention)
 E . . . The Hymnal, 1940 (Episcopal)
 F . . . Church School Hymnal for Youth (Presbyterian U.S.A.)
 H . . . The Hymnal (Presbyterian U.S.A.)
 I . . . The New Church Hymnal
 L . . . Common Service Book (Lutheran)
 M . . . The Methodist Hymnal
 P . . . Pilgrim Hymnal (Congregational, now United Church of Christ)
 S . . . The Service Hymnal
 W . . . Christian Worship (Northern Baptist Convention and Disciples)
 Y . . . New Hymnal for American Youth
 Z . . . Cokesbury Worship Hymnal (Methodist)
- All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name
 A—53; B—133; C—7; E—355; F—135; H—192; I—180; L—131; M—164; P—142; S—8; W—252; Y—135; Z—234
- "Are Ye Able," Said the Master
 A—184; C—108; M—268; W—360; Y—205; Z—186
- As with Gladness Men of Old
 A—259; B—88; E—52; F—96; H—135; I—125; L—38; M—90; P—84; W—196; Y—95
- Beneath the Cross of Jesus
 A—39; B—110; C—131; E—341; F—186; H—162; M—144; P—125; S—254; W—235; Y—120; Z—29
- Be Strong! We Are Not Here to Play
 A—182; C—154; F—214; H—488; I—488; M—300; P—253; S—381; Y—182
- Blest Be the Tie That Binds
 A—209; B—217; C—82; E—495; F—249; H—343; M—416; P—37; S—160; W—476; Y—312; Z—87
- Break Thou the Bread of Life
 A—235; B—81; C—77; F—157; H—216; I—197; M—387; P—412; S—129; W—461; Y—71; Z—88
- Christ the Lord Is Risen Today
 A—48; B—120; C—67; E—95; F—126; H—165; I—158; L—111; M—154; P—130; S—98; W—239; Y—129; Z—221
- Come, Sound His Praise Abroad
 F—46; M—22; P—8; W—118
- Come, Ye Thankful People, Come
 A—27; B—307; C—177; E—137; F—360; H—460; I—447; L—484; M—545; P—454; S—423; W—593; Y—322; Z—222
- Crown Him with Many Crowns
 A—66; B—141; C—8; E—352; F—134; H—190; I—170; L—134; M—170; P—141; S—18; W—250; Y—136
- Dare to Be Brave, Dare to Be True
 A—188; B—401; F—202; S—334
- Day Is Done
 C—29; Y—344

Living for Jesus

A—136; C—138; S—346; W—304;
Z—173

Lord of All Being, Throned Afar

A—18; B—40; C—3; E—291; H—
87; I—85; M—62; P—192; S—3;
W—151; Y—33

Lord, Speak to Me, That I May Speak

A—175; B—211; C—127; E—574;
F—293; H—399; I—321; L—212;
M—460; P—339; S—256; W—470;
Y—251; Z—167

Love Divine, All Love Excelling

A—111; B—183; C—60; E—479;
F—231; H—308; I—245; L—276;
M—372; P—270; S—84; W—379;
Y—67; Z—22

Low in the Grave He Lay

A—47; B—317; C—68; F—124;
S—103; Z—220

'Mid All the Traffic of the Ways

A—165; C—90; H—322; I—265;
M—341; Y—159

More Love to Thee, O Christ

A—110; B—195; C—106; E—461;
F—200; H—315; I—256; M—364;
P—146 S—289; W—390; Z—17

My Country, 'Tis of Thee

A—231; B—302; C—147; E—141;
F—304; H—412; I—440; L—490;
M—489; P—345; S—366; W—548;
Y—279; Z—226

My Faith Looks Up to Thee

A—103; B—168; C—123; E—449;
F—190; H—285; I—218; L—360;
M—213; P—498; S—278; W—355;
Y—155; Z—122

My God, I Thank Thee

B—49; C—179; F—361; H—73;
I—270; M—9; P—11; W—109;
Y—51

My Jesus, I Love Thee

B—323; P—509; S—245; W—382;
Z—252

Not Alone for Mighty Empire

E—145; H—416; I—434; M—543;
P—457; S—382; W—597

Now in the Days of Youth

A—207; C—124; F—175; P—477;
W—300; Y—146

Now Thank We All Our God

B—44; C—178; E—276; F—358;
H—459; I—12; L—283; M—7; P—
12; S—424; W—598; Y—325

Now the Day Is Over

A—26; B—15; C—21; E—172; F—
19; H—35; I—59; L—574; M—53;
P—58; S—35; W—149; Y—23; Z—
117

O Beautiful for Spacious Skies

B—300; C—144; F—297; H—411;
I—438; M—491; P—350; S—367;
W—550 Y—271; Z—228

O Come, All Ye Faithful

A—30; B—90; C—43; E—12; F—
89; H—116; I—120; M—96; P—
105; S—59; W—205; Y—83; Z—
219

O Church of God

C—80; W—432

O God, Our Help in Ages Past

A—145; B—39; C—30; E—289;
F—49; H—77; I—1; L—505; M—
533; P—177; S—47; W—585; Y—
28; Z—196

O Jesus, I Have Promised

B—193; C—134; E—570; F—187;
H—268; I—244; M—226; P—196;
S—251; W—308; Y—196; Z—52

O Jesus, Thou Art Standing

B—179; C—132; E—407; F—174;
H—228; I—205; L—322; M—197;
P—246; S—249; W—279; Y—148;
Z—132

O Little Town of Bethlehem

A—31; B—82; C—47; E—21; F—
78; H—121; I—121; L—31; M—
100; P—74; S—61; W—184; Y—82;
Z—214

O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go

A—130; B—232; C—139; E—458;
F—196; H—307; I—249; L—348;
M—318; P—289; S—246; W—388;
Y—154; Z—211

O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee

A—116; B—274; C—153; E—572;
F—182; H—364; I—312; M—259;
P—291; S—380; W—306; Y—197;
Z—50

O Where Are Kings and Empires Now?

B—242; E—382; F—250; H—334;
I—395; L—203; M—384; P—403;
S—144; W—427

O Worship the King

A—14; B—34; C—4; E—288; F—
29; H—2; I—2; L—294; M—4;
P—5; S—4; W—94; Y—36; Z—7

O Zion, Haste

A—222; B—264; C—166; E—261;
F—308; H—382; I—375; L—224;
M—475; P—372; S—386; W—529;
Y—306; Z—16

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings
Flow

A—304; B—408; C—188; E—139;
F—23; I—5; P—518; S—Front
Cover; Y—334; Z—5

Praise the Lord! Ye Heavens, Adore
Him

B—38; C—12; F—26; H—10; I—
16; L—300; M—11; P—7; W—110;
Y—30

Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart

A—9; B—47; C—9; E—579; F—
139; H—297; I—272; M—358; P—
476; S—338; W—418; Y—27; Z—
24

Rise Up, O Men of God

A—203; C—158; E—535; F—288;
H—401; I—332; M—267; P—313;
W—374; Y—254; Z—147

Saviour, Like a Shepherd Lead Us

B—377; E—247; H—458; I—479;
L—565; M—337; P—492; S—337;
W—401; Z—69

Saviour, Thy Dying Love

A—88; B—380; C—129; F—198;
H—396; I—257; M—219; P—486;
S—243; W—387; Z—33

Silent Night, Holy Night

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